

The newsletter of the Solihull & District branch
of CAMRA - the Campaign for Real Ale

www.solihullcamra.org.uk



Solihull Drinker

Issue No: 46

Autumn 2008

Solihull and District 10th Beer Festival

October 3rd - 4th 2008

Get ready for some excellent drinking!

Solihull CAMRA's annual Beer Festival is now only a few weeks away. As usual it will be held at the Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull, just a few minutes walk from the town centre.

The festival takes place on the 3rd and 4th of October. Friday opening is 5.30-11, Saturday 11.30-3.30 and 5.30-11.

Card carrying CAMRA members will receive a discount on entry prices, which like last year will be an entrance which includes entrance fee festival glass and refundable be accepted over the bars.

Over 30 beers and ciders order being bigger than last early on the Saturday Following CAMRA's promoting local ales we sourced from Midland hoping to up the order, but there is just not the space at the Legion, so apologies to all those who were hoping for more ales. What we have done is to order larger quantities of beers we feel you will all love!

On Saturday night we shall have live music, this year performed by Blues Basement and on Saturday lunchtime as an added bonus we open early for the White Hart Morris Men who will be performing on the British Legion car park.

Last year we raised £132 for Solihull Hospitals' Breath of Life charity, raising funds for equipment to help premature born babies—this year, our charity will be Diabetes UK.

We very much look forward to seeing you there and hope you have a great time!

More information available on www.solihullcamra.org.uk



will be available with the year when we ran out evening session. commitment to shall have some 10 beers breweries. We were

Inside: Don't miss the Dates for your Diary



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***"Autumn, season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" - and the hops and the
malt have been working their magic so that you can sup the Bull's Head's
fine ales at your leisure in this friendly atmosphere. Enjoy!***

July Social: Bromsgrove Beer Festival

In July a group from Solihull were sentenced to visit Bromsgrove for their annual Beer Festival.

Being their 6th Festival, the theme was the classic TV series 'The Prisoner' (the hero was Number 6). As it happened, I had time to sample 6 of their beers, all in excellent condition.

You certainly don't feel trapped at the Festival which is in very pleasant surroundings at the local Rugby Club. The beers (over 100) were in a large Marquee, but as well as the grounds there is a large Club-house to retire to where more beers and cheap food are also on offer.

The weather could have been kinder, but every time the sun came out everyone rushed outside to soak it up (though it also encouraged the local Morris Dancers, whose rain-dances were rather too effective!)

Later on we escaped into Bromsgrove town centre to visit some of the local pubs. The range of beers available has certainly improved: I seem to remember from previous visits there being only a couple of pubs worth visiting, currently there are about 5 (though we only had time to visit 4 of them)

So, a successful trip, and for future CAMRA festivals, remember:

"I am not a non-member, I am a free-entry man"



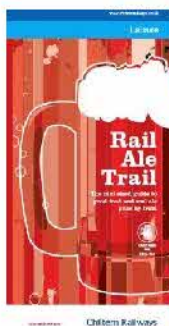
A cheerful member of staff

Steve Wood

Chiltern's Rail Ale Trail

CAMRA & Chiltern Railway have just launched a pint-sized guide to real ale and good food called The Chiltern Rail Ale Trail.

The Rail Ale Trail lists CAMRA recommended pubs within easy reach of stations along the Chiltern route, allowing you to enjoy a drink without worrying who's driving home.



Jon Howard, press officer at [CAMRA](#) said: "Wherever possible we encourage drinkers to act responsibly and use public transport, and this initiative really takes these points into consideration.

"The Ale Trail is a great way to get people out and about, and enjoy many of the region's historic public houses. We hope that in conjunction with the 'CAMRA Good Beer Guide', which also contains directions to public transport links, real ale drinkers will be fully equipped to find the best pint in their area."

Several of the pubs listed are in the Solihull and District area, and are well worth a visit if you have not been to them before. You can pick up your leaflet from all staffed Chiltern stations.

Hail to the Ale! - local Beer, Pub & Brewery news

The Vaults does it again!



The Vaults, in St. John's Close, Knowle, had previously won the Solihull and District CAMRA's Pub of the Year award no fewer than five times. Despite missing out to The Fieldhouse in 200, they have roared triumphantly back this year by winning it for the sixth time. They won the award despite stiff competition from at least 6 local pubs. Next year the competition may be even tougher with a couple of new and promising outlets having appeared on the local scene.

Roger Dipple, Branch Chairman, presented the award, saying "What makes this pub stand out from the crowd is the atmosphere, which is down to the people—the warm welcome you get from staff as soon as you walk through the door and the fact that you can have an interesting conversation with staff or clientele. The Vaults offers so much more than a place to get a drink—it is a worthy winner".

The Vaults is a traditional community pub, attracting a wide range of customer. Regular events are held, including mini beer festivals, race days, fishing trips, charity events, and pickled onion and sloe gin competitions. The pub stocks a good range of real ales plus two rotating guest beers from around the country.

The licensee, Nick Worrall, accepted the award proudly, giving thanks to all the CAMRA members for the continued support and recognition they had given him and his staff over the past happy years, and to all the their customers who know and love The Vaults.



Nick and Roger with The Vaults' award certificate

The Oak, Hockley Heath

At the beginning of July it was reported that less than a year after it was converted from Oro The Eating Place, The Oak in Hockley Heath has closed down for a refurbishment and has changed owners again.



It is now in the hands of Harshad Chavda, the man behind The Inn At Stonehall Common, near Worcester, who'll be transforming the pub and food hall into a fine-dining restaurant.

The pub was due to reopen at the end of August and can be found at 8640 Stratford Road, Hockley Heath. Tel: 01564 785252

'No Alcohol Zone' in Shirley

WEST Midlands Police in Shirley are working with local residents to make the borough safer, by introducing a "No Alcohol Zone" in Baxters Green.

A Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) has been in place here since mid-June. From 2001 local authorities could designate public areas through the introduction of a DPPO where it is an offence to drink alcohol after being asked by a police officer not to do so.



The police have the power to ask individuals to surrender the alcohol and any opened or sealed containers, and if they fail to comply with the request they can be arrested. The powers - which replaced the old drinking bylaws - were introduced to help the police deal with the problems of anti-social drinking in public spaces. DPPOs make it easier for local au-

thorities to assist areas that have experienced alcohol-related disorder or nuisance.

Supported by local officers, the local residents' group, Woodlands Residents Action Group (WRAG), have successfully campaigned for the order following a number of incidences involving anti-social behaviour in the local area. Since the introduction of the order, several people have already had alcohol taken off them and disposed of and incidences of anti-social behaviour have already started to reduce.

The Greville Arms, Elmdon

Towards the end of 2007, The Greville Arms in Damson Lane received a smart refurbishment, giving it the slight look of an Ember Inn. More importantly, it has a range of three real ales, possibly for the first time ever! On a recent visit there was John Smiths, Banks' Bitter and Black Sheep Bitter, all in good condition and reasonable priced, averaging under £2.10 per pint. There is also provision for smokers with seating outdoors at the front and a pleasant terrace at the rear.

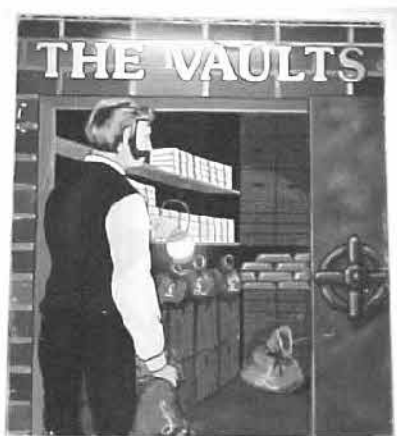
The Assembly Rooms

James, the manager at JD Wetherspoon's The Assembly Rooms, 21 Poplar Road, Solihull, is planning a couple of events for CAMRA members soon, to continue the pub's links with CAMRA.

On Saturday 4th October, between 3.30 & 5.30pm, card-carrying CAMRA members attending the Solihull Beer Festival will be treated to free food and reduced real ale prices.

On Wednesday 22nd October, CAMRA card-carrying members can Meet the Brewer between 7.30 & 9.30pm when Springhead Brewery drop by with samples of six of their ales and handy hints on tasting and appreciating real ale. Springhead Brewery is based in Sutton on Trent, Notts., and have a 50-barrel plant supplying some 500 outlets. Many of the beers are named after Civil War themes.

Nick and Gwen welcome you to



The Real Ale venue in Knowle

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Nick, Gwen and our great staff look forward to welcoming you.

CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed since 1993



***The Vaults, St John's Close, Knowle.
Tel: 01564 773656***

Hereford brewer wins top award

Wye Valley Brewery, Herefordshire's leading brewery and a family business which has been running for 23 years, gained a top award for one of its bottled beers at Britain's biggest beer event, the CAMRA Great British Beer Festival 2008 at Earls Court, London.



Wye Valley Brewery's popular bottled beer Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout was crowned CAMRA Champion Bottle-Conditioned Beer of Britain 2008. This award is one of many for Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout, but is the most significant so far, going one better than when it won Silver in the same competition last year.

Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout is a classic stout, described by Britain's foremost beer writer, Roger Protz, as a 'full-bodied and memorable beer..., the palate is smooth and creamy with overtones of roasted grain and bitter chocolate'.



Free travel up for Grabs

Travel West Midlands are offering a day's free travel to anyone who applies for a Day-saver ticket.

Simply visit www.nationalexpress.com/freedaysaver and complete the details online. A ticket will be posted to you and can be used any day before 31st March 2009.

The Nag's Head, Hockley Heath

It looks like another pub loss is in the cards: an outline planning application has been submitted for means of access, appearance, layout and scale for the proposed demolition of the public house and restaurant and the erection of a residential care home for the elderly to accommodate 80 residents.

The Solihull Drinker is the newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

**All contributions, comments and enquiries should be sent to Julia Hammonds:
The Editor, Solihull Drinker, c/o 4, Kendrick Close, Solihull, B92 0QD
or e-mail julia.hammonds@blueyonder.co.uk**

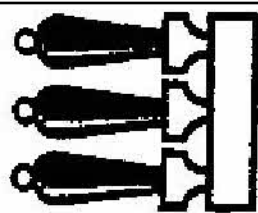
The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten any contributions in the Solihull Drinker, but will always honour the spirit of the contribution.

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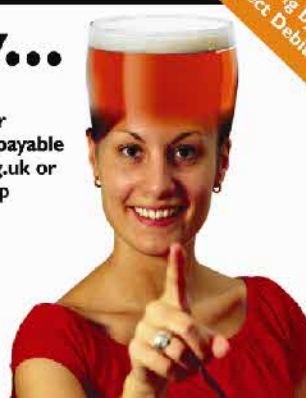


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Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.



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For concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for

Signed Date

Applications will be processed within 21 days



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Dates For Your Diary

Branch Meetings

Monday 1st September	The Wharf, Hockley Heath
Monday 13th October	The Black Boy, Heronfield (NB. change of date)
Monday 3rd November	Red Lion, Shirley (inc. AGM—8.00pm start)
Monday 1st December	The Lyndon, Olton

(NB. All Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)

Socials

Thursday 11th—Sunday 14th September Weekend away, Liverpool
December Christmas local beer crawl—TBA

Forthcoming Beer Festivals

Friday 3rd - Saturday 5th Oct	Solihull & District CAMRA 10th Beer Festival, Royal British Legion, Broomfield Hall, Union Road, Solihull
Thurs 4th—Sat 6th Sept	Tamworth Beer Festival
Thurs 11th—Sat 13th Sept	Birmingham Beer Festival
Thurs 18th—Sat 20th Sept	Burton upon Trent Beer Festival

For meetings/socials yet to be confirmed or if more details are needed, visit our website: www.SolihullCamra.org.uk, or contact Chairman Roger Dipple on 0121 705 6606.

More information on forthcoming beer festivals is also available on the website.

Membership Matters

Are you a local CAMRA member who would like to get more involved with the Branch? Would a Committee post interest you? We currently have vacancies for the roles of Secretary, Social Secretary, and Press and Publicity Officer (and our Chairman has indicated that if there is a volunteer for the role of Chairman, he will take over as Secretary).

None of the roles are very difficult, and there are members available who have been in these posts before to help newcomers out.

We are keen that more members get involved with the Branch to keep it going and help it to grow and build on its successes. If you think you could help—or know a local CAMRA member who might be interested—then please pass these details on, and/or call me on 0121 603 1621.

Carl Wright
Membership Secretary

High Pub Prices?

We all love to complain about increasing prices but having just been on a holiday which took in some of Scandinavia, I was quite happy to get back to paying Solihull prices again!

First call was Bruges where at least we managed to taste some decent beer. We tried a Dunkell & an amber ale on draught and Palm in bottle. All had loads of flavour and cost on average 2 Euros (about £1.75) for either 50cc draught or 33cc bottles. Not too pricey we thought.

We then moved on to Copenhagen, home of the dreaded Carlsberg. We managed to avoid paying over £5 for 50cc of the legendary bland fizz when we found an outlet for a local Brewery in the Neuhavn area, renowned for trendy bars and bistros. They had bottles of stout and amber ale to take away at about £2 a bottle but we decided to try the draught versions. Although served with CO₂, they were both very tasty but when it came to the bill, we did wonder if we should have bothered. It was 16 Euros – well over £12 for 2 small glasses.

But it gets worse! Next stop was Stockholm, Sweden where we actually found a pub selling Shepherd Neame beers on handpump. It was close to the hotel quarter or we would never have found it. There were 4 ales on offer at 66 Kroner a pint (about £6) Having just paid about £14 for a vodka cocktail in the famous Ice Bar nearby, we gave it a miss.

We then moved on to Helsinki, Finland. We had by now got to the stage where we did not want to even ask how much the beer was, but eventually I spotted a small glass of an unknown lager at £4.50. Needless to say, we did not jump at the chance to invest.

After a little respite from high prices when we stopped off in Russia, Estonia and Poland we finished up in Oslo which really took first prize in the extortion stakes. One of the main streets in the city centre featured a long row of lively cafes with open air sections filled with locals enjoying lunch in the sunshine. I did fancy a beer but a quick glance at the menu (as well as a distinct lack of Norwegian Kroner) made for an easy decision. Thanks but no thanks for a 25cc glass of "Noggin the Nog" lager at 70 Kroner. That is the equivalent of over £14 per pint! At these prices you would think the locals would all be teetotal but there were plenty of mainly youngsters knocking back the beer. In any event, if you just have a coke, it still costs over £5.

So will we complain about paying £2.80 for a pint of decent real ale? Probably not for a week or so, but it will not take long to get back to normal!

Some of you may be wondering how we managed to visit all these countries in just 2 weeks. We went on a cruise – by far the best way to see Scandinavia as you don't have to pay their extortionate beer prices if you don't want to. Mind you, the alternative is to stay on the ship and drink keg at £2.80 a pint!

Allan Duffy

Did you know...

..... that Louis Pasteur developed pasteurisation for beer more than 20 years before he did it for milk?

ADRIAN AND THE COMMITTEE WARMLY WELCOME YOU TO

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(full membership: £10.00 per annum)

Forthcoming Events

Sunday 5th October **Marrow Day** (open day, everyone welcome!)

Compete for the Heaviest Marrow, Longest Carrot, Longest Runner Bean, Longest Parsnip, and Heaviest Onion, and a **new** 'wild card' class — do you grow something that is the envy of your neighbours? Bring it along and see if it is the Best of the Best! Plus, Best Jam Sponge, and Best Preserves. Entry fee only £1.00 per person regardless of number of entries! Also: **new** this year: Children's' Best Miniature Garden. Proceeds to the Air Ambulance fund. Plus competitions, Tombola, stalls and whacky games—plenty of fun for everyone!!!

Saturday evening events a speciality: phone the Club for details of who's on - all who come will be welcome.

**For full details of all events, please ring Adrian at
The Rowington Club, and he will be only too pleased
to talk to you about a wonderful time out.**

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Real Ale on the Up

Although overall pub beer sales have sunk to their lowest level since the 1930s, real ale has weathered the storm a little better. Nielsen research suggests that overall beer sales in pubs are 9% lower than a year ago - while they remain steady in supermarkets. But while lager slipped heavily, cask ale sales dropped only about 1.3% last year, with some brewers such as Fullers reporting a slight increase in demand.

"The only breweries that seem to be brewing more beer now than before, that are seeing their sales rise, are the smallest breweries, with 600 microbreweries in the UK and 35 family brewers. This sector of the market is very active," said Iain Loe of the Campaign for Real Ale.

Times are tough for the industry as a whole. "In many ways you've got the perfect storm for pubs," said Graham Page of Nielsen. "There are the supermarkets selling alcohol very cheaply, while in the pubs it is relatively expensive and you can no longer smoke. Then you have got an economic situation with everybody having to adapt to the lack of credit and spending power, and a government which is upping the duty on alcohol and making it the new tobacco in terms of the damage they say it is causing to our health." And for real ale firms, there is the battle of getting a pump onto more bars, he adds, with many pubs tied to either a chain or a brewing giant.

But Mr Page, who has been in the industry for 40 years, said there was a reason for cask ale demand holding up relatively well. "It has provenance, it can be organic, it can be green, it can be local - all things that people are looking for these days, It fits in with the pressure to offer variety and to be more local," he said. "So for pubs it's something that looks good to have on your bars, and it can drive traffic." The same traits meant that supermarkets were happy to stock an increasingly wide range of bottled ale.

The consensus of opinion within the trade is that those who make "decent beer" would manage to stay afloat. Yes, pubs are closing which is worrying - but it tends to be the less well-run pubs that do shut. And while the supermarkets sell drink cheaply, it's a different market. If somebody wants a nice ale, something different, they would seek it out in a pub.

West Midlands POTY 2008

The winners of the County round were:

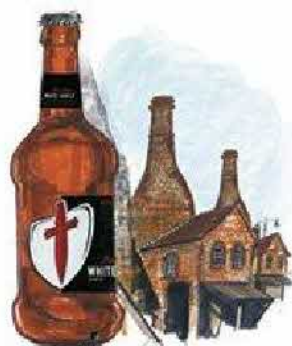
Marches	Chequers, Leominster
Staffordshire	Swan Inn, Bignall End, Stoke-on-Trent
Warwickshire	Plough, Stretton on Fosse
West Midlands	Beacon Hotel, Sedgley
Worcestershire	Weighbridge, Alvechurch

After the Regional round, the triumphant pub and the overall West Midlands Pub of the Year was The Beacon Hotel, Sedgley. Tasty beer, friendly staff and an open-door policy for dogs are all attributed by locals to the pub's success.

A visit to the White Shield Brewery, Burton, May 2008

When we heard that Coors were to close their visitor centre, better known as the Bass Museum of Brewing, it seemed we should make a trip to visit it, in case it should be the last. The following is a report of a recce visit by some of the Branch members.

In the early years (it opened in 1977) the museum included a model brewery which was open to the public - you could climb the steps around it right to the top at around 20ft, so it was an impressive exhibit. The plant had originally been a pilot one, used for trials at the Cape Hill brewery near Birmingham and can be seen in use in photos in the Museum. However while open to the public it was cold and lifeless. More recently it became a working part of the museum and was then renamed the White Shield brewery, still within the museum and still



visible through the door, but no longer open to touch. The brewery is responsible for producing all the bottle conditioned Worthington White Shield we see today in the shops and supermarkets - quite a responsibility for a pilot plant the size of a typical micro brewery. The beer started life in Burton and is considered a classic, but over time was moved to various other breweries, including coincidentally Cape Hill, before returning to Burton to be cherished once more. The brewery also makes special one-offs and as it has access to the Bass archives it can also recreate old brews such as Russian No 1 Imperial Stout.

On arrival we were greeted as VIPs, and Steve Wellington, the head brewer, took us to the brewery where the electric hoist for the malt was about the only new device. The malt arrives uncrushed - Steve said it was vital to mill your own malt to the right degree. The recipes are fairly conventional, best quality malt and hops of the traditional varieties. The plant is a little small (at 5 barrels) for the production demands, but they fill it up and work it hard to produce nearer 10 barrels a brew. It takes 2 to mash in, one to control the malt and one the water to ensure a spot-on strike temperature of 67.5 C. By the time we were there it was already sparging today's batch and the classic Horlicks smell was wonderful. The mash was still floating on the water (liquor) below as it drained down to the copper. And on that note Steve commented on the importance of copper to Burton. Many people will be familiar with that sulphurous smell of some Burton beers - the Burton Snatch. This is due to the local hard water but can be avoided if the mash tun and/or copper (where it is boiled with the hops) are made of copper (hence the name). If the plant is made from stainless steel, then all is not lost - a few pieces of copper pipe will do the trick (it is a well

known catalyst after all), but it must be done in the hot stages before fermentation.

At this stage, the brewery shows its production volumes and the lack of capacity. They brew several times then collect it all up into a big fermentation vessel and ferment once a week, using some classic yeasts. In fact two are used: one for the primary fermentation and then another for the bottling. The latter was chosen as one that settles and sticks together, so that it is easy to pour. Finally it is bottled on a rather smart little machine from Italy. Once packed, it is put in a warm store (approx 20 C) for a month or more to reach perfection. After the boil, with early and late hops, it is cooled and fed to the fermentation vessels. Here a bit of old plant is on view and still in use. The importance of cleanliness is well known, and contact with air is generally a risk of infection once boiled, and yet this old cooler is a Baudet design: cold water inside, once warmed fed into the liquor tanks for the next batch (breweries have been saving water and energy since the early days); the beer meanwhile trickles down the outside open to the air. Steve commented that after all the boiling there is no oxygen left in the beer and the yeast needs it, so this external cooler allows the liquor to be aerated, absorbing the oxygen from the air. What about infections? Not a problem, lab tests show that this brewery has 1/10th the microbes of the big guys next door (and theirs is OK) - it just works.



The museum's restaurant and bar serves as the brewery tap. There are 3 pumps available: White Shield, St Modwen and Brewery Tap and not a sparkler in sight. The beers arrived looking superb (just a small frothy head, nothing like the fake ones) and the aroma of hops was wonderful, even before picking up the glass. It is worth reflecting on the fact that as a rule White Shield is bottled (and very fine too) but rarely in cask; this was a special occasion. The beer tasted as good as it looked - excellent: a classic balance of malt and hops, bitter and aroma, wonderful stuff. The other 2 were also excellent, and different.

Finally, to all those who think Bass isn't what it was, try Worthington E. Back in the 60s the same recipe was used for both "a pint of Bass" and Worthington E. Very soon the Worthington E brand became keg only and the real ale was the Bass brand. Over the years that too moved breweries and changed, but the White Shield brewery also makes some Worthington E draught cask conditioned. It was available on request in the tap, and as they only have 3 hand pumps, they fetched it direct from the cask in the cellar. Another excellent pint, and yes, if all Bass tasted like that they could probably sell a lot more.



Many thanks to Steve for a fascinating visit; Burton is still brewing some of the finest beers you will ever taste.

Robert Cawte

Purity Brewing Co.

There's been plenty happening at Purity Brewing Co. In May, Farmers Harvest (a full flavoured amber beer brewed to commemorate the centenary of the National Farmers Union) won the drinks category of the Heart of England Fine Foods Diamond Awards which showcased the diversity, depth and quality of the Region's food and drink. It was the subject of a Central TV news feature in June that captured the story of its origins through to the brewing process.

Purity have been busily involved with beer festivals and show-casing their hand crafted brews and imported lagers at events such as the Royal Show and Taste of Birmingham. They were also nominated a Royal Agricultural Society of England Food Champion 2008 for their collaboration and contribution to agriculture and sustainability. These awards recognise the contribution that companies make to independent British food retailing, rather than judging specific products.

Other events included sponsorship of the Ilmington Village 20/20 Cricket Carnival; and a collaboration with Moseley Folk Festival 2008 when Purity supplied the festival's beer tent with the likes of Pure UBU, Gold, Veltins & Pure Czech.

You can check out www.puritybrewing.com for all their latest news.

Who will pitch for Cains?

More than a dozen bidders have expressed interest in acquiring Cains, the Liverpool brewer that is one of the largest suppliers of own brand beer to supermarkets. Cain's, which produces up to 150 million cans of beer a year for retailers such as Asda, collapsed into administration after running into cashflow difficulties following the smoking ban introduced in July 2007 and crippling rises in commodity costs.

Cains produces up to 1,650 cans of lager and beer every minute at its state-of-the-art canning facility in Liverpool. The brewery produces beers such as Asda's own-label Pilsner as well as its Smart Price lager and bitter lines. It also manufactures its own products - which includes Cains Finest Bitter and Cains Rock.

It is understood that at least 12 parties had been in touch with Pricewaterhouse Coopers, the administrator, about acquiring all or part of the group, which also has a 100-strong pub business. A spokesman for Asda said that the supermarket had been assured that the brewery will continue producing as a going concern.

"We've been reassured that, despite going into administration, it is business as usual. They are continuing to brew, package and deliver beer and we are not expecting any issues with supply" said the supermarket spokesman.

CAMRA has responded to the news that Cains has been placed in administration with a pledge to support a buyer who will keep the historic Liverpool brewery in production. Mike Benner, CE, said, "Beer drinkers in Liverpool should not lose out and we will support any company that puts forward a rescue plan for the ailing brewer to ensure great beer continues to be brewed at the Stanhope Street Brewery.

J.D. Wetherspoon

Now two Wetherspoon's pubs in Solihull Town Centre offer you a choice of casual drinking or wining and dining.

Over the last 10 years, JD Wetherspoon has won over 50 national and regional awards, acknowledging excellence in all aspects of the business; and they are consistently in the top 100 employers. Cask Marque has awarded 650 of their pubs with their accreditation so you can be sure of the perfect pint. They offer carefully chosen menus, with leaflets available to explain where all their produce comes from; and have an award winning children's' menu which combines quality, healthy goodness and value with organic options.

The White Swan, opened on March 2004, and now The Assembly Rooms, opened in February 2008, are proud to serve Solihull town centre in their separate establishments. As you can see from the above, quality produce and excellent service is a watchword, and we do hope that you will take the time to visit us at any time during the day or night during our extensive opening hours. You will be sure of a warm welcome.

The Assembly Rooms, 21 Poplar Road, Solihull, B91 3AD

Phone: 0121 711 6990

Opening times: Sun—Wed: 9.00am—1.00am; Thurs—Sat: 9.00am—2.00am

Next to an exit from Mell Square shopping centre and car park, The Assembly Rooms is ideally situated for a shopping trip break, and our opening hours should suit everyone.

Lloyds No.1 bars have pleasant background music; at the weekends, in busy towns, the party continues into the evenings – many with live DJs getting you in the mood for a great night out! We restrict music to the upper floor, leaving downstairs visitors to enjoy a more peaceful visit. With 15 hand-pumps, we are proud that we can offer discerning drinkers a wide range of real ales plus other drinks to enhance their visit.

Forthcoming events:

Sat. 4th October, 3.30—5.30pm: snacks and real ales at £1.79 per pint for card-carrying CAMRA members during the interval of the Solihull Beer Festival Saturday sessions.

Wed. 22nd October, 7.30-9.30pm: "Meet the Brewer" with Springhead Brewery—free tasting of their 6 real ales for card-carrying CAMRA members.

For any queries: contact James, the manager, or one of his staff on 0121 711 6990.

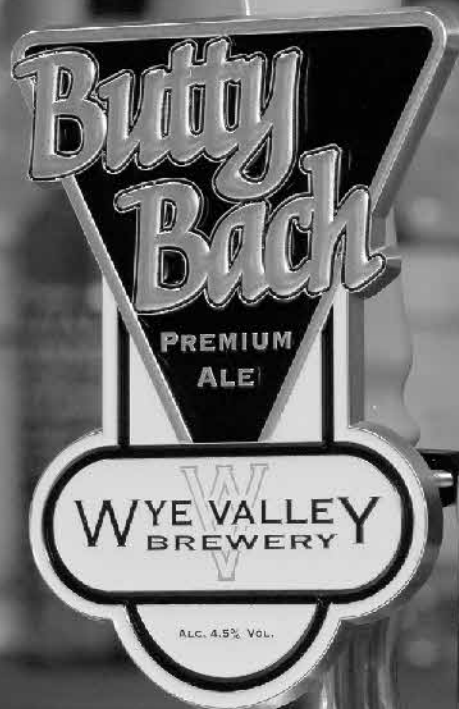
The White Swan, 32-34 Station Road, Solihull, B91 3SB

Phone: 0121 711 5180

Opening times: Sun—Thurs: 9am—midnight; Fri/Sat: 9am—1am

The White Swan was an old coaching inn at the corner of Station Road, which became a private residence known as Silhill House in the 1820s. 'Silhill' was once a popular variation of 'Solihull'. Demolished around 1926, it was replaced by the present Tudor-style shops. Solihull's transformation from a sleepy market town to a Metropolitan Borough dates from the opening of the railway in 1852. The White Swan is enjoying its popularity within the town and is hoping to run a mini-beer festival in the near future.

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A burnished gold premium ale.
Full bodied, smooth and satisfying.

Dorothy Goodbody's
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