



# Solihull



# Drinker

Issue No 84  
Summer 2018

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Please take one

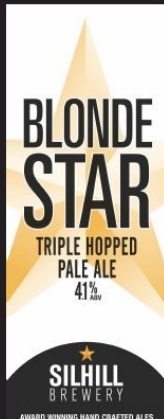
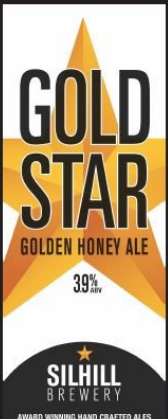
## CAMRA Votes For Change At The AGM In Coventry

The sun shone on CAMRA at the end of April, when the Revitalisation project ended in acceptance of 9 out of 10 special motions to update CAMRA's Articles of Association. The Campaign had chosen the West Midlands, and Coventry in particular, for this historic vote and around a thousand members took advantage of the excellent weather to turn out, debate the issues, and cast their votes.

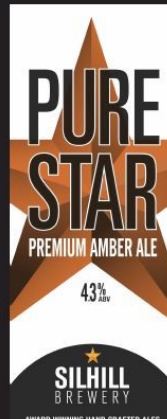
Further details in the Editorial on page 3 and on pages 8, 9, and 10.



***Some of the West Midlands contingent and volunteers enjoying the sun at the CAMRA AGM at the University of Warwick in Coventry (photo by Phil Vickers).***



  
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## Editorial Comment

When I first took over as editor of the Solihull Drinker two years ago, I wrote an editorial on the future of CAMRA, based on the initial consultation meetings of the Revitalisation Project.

On Saturday 21st April 2018 the Campaign voted overwhelmingly for change, although if you read the national headlines you might not have thought so. The worst and most laughable came in the Daily Telegraph with "Real ale drinkers reject Camra's bid to support lager for the first time", a total misrepresentation of what happened.

The facts are that all the special resolutions were passed by a large majority of the members who voted, and even the single resolution that did not achieve the level of majority (75%) needed, achieved over 72%. That resolution was "to act as the voice and represent the interests of all pub-goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers".

However, when you look at the other resolutions that **were** passed, related to improving quality, promoting pubs and clubs, recognising the benefits of moderate social drinking, and looking after the consumer, all drinkers will see the fruits of CAMRA's labours anyway. The best argument on the day likened

the situation to unions fighting for their members' benefits. All workers benefit from the union negotiated pay deals and benefits, just as all drinkers benefit if we can keep pubs open, improve drinks quality and education, and stand up for consumers rights.

This was my first Members' Weekend, and won't be my last. One of the other resolutions passed was that "CAMRA will operate in a transparent, inclusive, enthusiastic and welcoming manner, at all levels." Easy words to say, but this was the behaviour I witnessed throughout the weekend. Rivals in the debates could drink together in the member's bar (selecting from over 65 local real ales), and you could just chat to members of the National Executive or the Chairman himself, as I did. Everybody was engaged, interested and respectful. A great advert for CAMRA.

The other encouraging thing I took out of the weekend was the election of Ash Corbett-Collins to the National Executive at the age of just 26. When CAMRA was formed in 1971 the founders were young men. To continue into the future CAMRA needs more young people like Ash to get involved at all levels.

*David Cove, Editor*

### Features in this issue include:

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## Dates For Your Diary

### Branch Meetings

*(Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)*

|                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Monday 2nd July      | White Lion, Hampton In Arden |
| Monday 6th August    | Bulls Head, Earlswood        |
| Monday 3rd September | Durham Ox, Shrewley          |

### Committee Meetings

*(8.30pm start. Members may attend but only participate if invited to do so by the Committee)*

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday 16th July | Beech House, Solihull |
|------------------|-----------------------|

### Socials

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Saturday 23rd June     | Leicester pub crawl                    |
| Wednesday 11th July    | Midweek crawl to Lye and Stourbridge   |
| Sunday 22nd July (TBC) | Canal pub ramble                       |
| Saturday 11th August   | Jewellery Quarter crawl & brewery trip |

**For more details and contacts for the above, please call Secretary Allan Duffy on 01564 200 431 or visit our website: [www.solihull.camra.org.uk](http://www.solihull.camra.org.uk)**

***Most, though not all, of our local pubs have disabled access. If you wish to come to a meeting and require assistance to get inside, contact us beforehand and we will do our best to help.***

## Upcoming Midlands Area Beer Festivals and Events

**June 7–9 (Thu-Sat):**

### **43rd Wolverhampton Beer & Cider Fest**

Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley St, Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN. 70 real ales and a range of ciders/perries & foreign bottled beer bar. National Express no 6 bus from Wolverhampton Bus Station or a 20 min walk from the railway, bus & Metro stations. Open Thu 5-11pm, Fri 12noon-11pm, Sat 12noon-11pm. Admission prices: Thu £3.50, Fri £3.50, Sat free all day. CAMRA members get £1 beer token except Sat. Facebook: Wolverhampton CAMRA Beer Festival 2018, website: [www.wolverhampton.camra.org.uk](http://www.wolverhampton.camra.org.uk)

**June 16 (Sat):**

### **St Giles Beer Festival**

St Giles church, 149 Church Rd, Birmingham B25 8UP. 12 noon to 10pm. Over 20 ales and 15 ciders. Hot and cold food served throughout the day. Further details on Facebook @stgilesbeerfest.

**June 22-24 (Fri– Sun):**

### **11th Griffin Beer Festival**

Griffin Inn, Church Road, Shustoke, B46 2LB. 100+ beers, 30+ ciders, live music, food and camping available. From noon each day.

**June 28– 30 (Thu-Sat):**

### **Bromsgrove Beer & Cider Fest**

Bromsgrove Rugby Club, Finstall Rd, Bromsgrove B60 3DH. 144 beers & 50+ ciders/perries. Open Thu 6-11pm (CAMRA members & Trade Only); Fri 12noon-11pm; Sat 11am-9.30pm. Entry £3 (members £1) + £2 Souvenir glass. Food available and live music from Friday (see website for details). Plenty of room outside, marquee for picnics, & family games. Camping available from Rugby club. 10mins walk from Bromsgrove station & buses available from town centre. Details [www.bromsgrovebeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.bromsgrovebeerfestival.org.uk)

**July 6-7 (Fri-Sat):**

**Stratford-Upon-Avon Beer & Cider Fest**

Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse, Luddington Rd, Stratford CV37 9SE. Run by Shakespeare CAMRA. 75+ beers & 30+ ciders/perries. Food available. Town shuttle service from railway station, camping via racecourse campsite (enquire direct). £10 entrance to include glass, programme, & £5 tokens. Fri 12noon-11pm, Sat 11am-11pm. Info: [www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.stratfordbeerfestival.org.uk)

**July 12-15 (Thur-Sun):**

**Inn On The Green Beer Fest**

2 Westley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7UH. 20+ales, 6 ciders. Music Fri and Sat live and free. Discount for CAMRA members.

**July 27-29 (Fri-Sun):**

**Market Bosworth Rail Ale Festival**

The Battlefield Line, The Goods Shed, Market Bosworth Railway Station, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire CV13 0PF. 80 real ales, 30 ciders & perries and Pimm's in the Goods Shed and adjacent marquee, plus real ales and ciders on the trains (ticket required). Featuring steam locomotives, traction engines, road rollers, steam lorries, fairground organ and commercial vehicles. Hot & cold food available all day. Children's entertainment. On-site camping available. Fri 11am-11pm, Sat 10am, Bars 11am-11pm, Sun 10am, Bars 11am-5pm. Adults £5, children under 16 £3, under 4 free. Friday 11am-5pm: adults £2, under 16 free. Card carrying CAMRA members £1 at all times. Free entry when travelling by train from Shackerstone or Shenton.

**July 26-28 (Thu-Sat):**

**11th Stafford Beer & Cider Fest**

Blessed William Howard School, Rowley Avenue, Stafford, ST17 9AB. Under 10 mins walk from Stafford rail station, off Newport Rd. 65 real ales, 30 ciders/perries, country wines, gin bar & bottled beers. Hot food, live music, semi acoustic Fri/Sat evening, brass band Sat afternoon. Thu 6-11pm; Fri 11.30am-4pm

+ 4-11pm; Sat 12noon-10.30pm. Fri/Sat afternoon families welcome. Other sessions over 18s. Admission £1 Thu & Fri afternoon; £3 Fri evening; £2 Sat. £1 entrance discount to CAMRA members with valid cards. Refundable glass hire £3 or souvenir glass £3.

Info: [www.staffordbeerfestival.co.uk](http://www.staffordbeerfestival.co.uk)

**August 9-11 (Thu-Sat):**

**Black Country Beer Festival**

Lye Cricket Club, Stourbridge Road Sports Ground, Lye, West Mids DY9 7DH. Over 120 real ales, ciders and perrys. £10 entry includes glass and £5 of drinks vouchers. £2 off for CAMRA members. Live music, Black Country BBQ. Times: Thur 6-11pm, Fri & Sat 12pm -11pm Contact 07916 620 934 or [www.blackcountrybeerfestival.com](http://www.blackcountrybeerfestival.com)

**August 9-11 (Thu-Sat):**

**Worcester Beer, Cider & Perry Fest**

Worcester Racecourse, Grand Stand Rd, Worcester, WR1 3EJ. Details not yet available but last year there were 170+ real ales and 100 ciders. Thur 5pm-11pm, Fri Noon-11pm, Sat Noon-10pm Friday is by advance ticket only. More info: [www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk](http://www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk)

**September 6-8 (Thu-Sat):**

**25th Tamworth Beer Festival**

Tamworth Masonic Rooms, 29 Lichfield Street, B79 7QE. 75+ ales plus ciders, perries and bottled beers from micro breweries, including festival specials and many new ales. Thu to Sat 11-11pm. Admission £3 except Fri 5-11pm (£4) and Sat (£1). CAMRA members free at all times.

## Save The Date

**October 5-6 (Fri-Sat):**

**Solihull CAMRA Beer Festival**

The Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull B91 3DH. Approximately 45 real ales plus cider and perry. Homebrew competition and live music Saturday. Check our website and Facebook for updates [www.solihull.camra.org.uk](http://www.solihull.camra.org.uk).



# Midweek Crawl to Rowley Regis and Blackheath

Not midweek, but Fridays are a good day to do pub crawls as most pubs are open all day. With a turnout of twenty five, this crawl proved to be the most popular yet. A direct train from either Solihull or Shirley saw us arrive at Rowley Regis just before noon to head up-hill for our first stop at the Britannia Pub and Brewery at 18 Rowley Village.

Following refurbishment in late 2017, the brewer Dean Cartwright, from Pig Iron, set up the Britt Brewery on site. Luckily Dean was on duty and gave us an impromptu tour of the brewery, including a taster of Bell End Bitter straight from the fermenter. The pub itself is quite spacious having two bars and a large conservatory which we took over. Unfortunately the cook was not in when we visited so we made do with very large hot pork or beef cobs.



Craft and bottled beers, plus ciders support 9 real ales, which on our visit were Britt Breweries Working Mon's Mild and Bell End Bitter, Froth Blowers Gollop of Zest, Pig Iron Round Oak Stout, Black Country Ales Pig on the Wall, Woods Tight Head, Malvern Hills Black Pear, Wye Valley Butty Bach, and Fixed Wheel Chain Reaction. The Bell End Bitter was particularly nice with a flavour of vanilla, in excellent condition, followed closely by Pig Iron's Stout and Gollop of Zest.



***Sampling the beers at the Britannia***

Reluctantly leaving the Britannia we caught the bus down to Shell-ter, a micro pub opened in late 2017 on Nim-mings Lane. This proved disappointing. Three beers were on tap, Hobson's Town Crier, Wye Valley HPA and St Austell Tribute, not a very imaginative range. Indeed some of our party turned round and went on to the next pub on our list. To cap it all we had hardly got through the door when the Town Crier was taken off. The HPA was OK but I was disappointed with the range, although the pub, more like a shop style bar, was OK, if a little devoid of character. What a shame that this new addition isn't more adventurous in terms of its beer range. Maybe it was just a bad day, though I had heard other reports confirming my opinion.

A short walk took us to the Swan on Long Lane. Saved from becoming a supermarket, and voted Halesowen CAMRA pub of the Year in 2016, this Black Country Ales pub would guarantee a choice of beers in a traditional pub. We were not disappointed. Here we go with the 10 beers on tap; Black Country Ales Pig on the Wall, BFG, and Fireside, Purity UBU, Salopian Kashmir, an excellent hoppy beer at 5.5%, Salopian Vanishing Point, Burton Bridge

Top Dog Stout, very nice, Old Pie Factory American Pie, Nethergate Five Rifles, and Titanic Chocolate and Vanilla Stout. I found this a very friendly local full of chatty folk, and while there some of the party took advantage of food before we moved on to our last venue.

Backtracking a short distance to the Long Lane Trading Estate, we finished off at the Fixed Wheel Brewery Tap. I really like brewery taps in the brewery itself. Quite spartan with benches and tables, the bar was nevertheless busy, exuding a great atmosphere. 10 taps sported key kegs. Ciders were also available and 4 handpumped beers, which on the day of our visit were Fixed Wheel's Black Heath Stout, Chain Reaction, Gold and Bar Tap. I tried the Chain Reaction, which was superb, and close behind it came the Gold. Only



### ***Finishing up at Fixed Wheel***

open on Fridays and Saturdays, make sure you sit somewhere near the heaters as it can be a little chilly in winter, but it is well worth the visit. Being our last port of call we made our way up Nimmings Lane back to Rowley Regis station and back to Solihull.

*Steve Dyson*

# The Wharf Tavern

Elysha and the team Welcome you!



- Cask Marque accredited real ales.
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- Healthy gin and spirit choice

• Tasty pub grub served 12pm - 9pm each day with great deals!



*Come in and see for yourself!*

The Wharf Tavern, 2390 Stratford Road, Hockley Heath, Solihull, B946QT

01564782075

# CAMRA Members Call For Positive Change

On April 21st CAMRA members voted to approve change, following the largest consultation in its 47 year history, and approved all but one of its National Executive's (CAMRA's board of directors) recommendations designed to take the organisation into the future.

Almost 18,000 members voted online and at CAMRA's AGM, held in Coventry, to express their views on changes to CAMRA's Articles of Association to re-define the 47-year-old organisation's purpose and campaigning activities.

Members voted to remove the organisation's current "objects" in the Articles of Association – the statement of what the Campaign exists to achieve.

In their place, members voted to approve recommendations to add in new objects for the Campaign, designed to make the organisation more inclusive, relevant and welcoming:

- 1) To secure the long term future of real ale, real cider and real perry by increasing their quality, availability and popularity
- 2) To promote and protect pubs and clubs as social centres as part of the UK's cultural heritage
- 3) To increase recognition of the benefits of responsible, moderate social drinking
- 4) To play a leading role in the provision of information, education and training to all those with an interest in beer, cider and perry of any type
- 5) To ensure, where possible, that producers and retailers of beer, cider and perry act in the best interests of the customer.

However, despite 72% of members agreeing to the measure, the 75% per cent threshold was not met to approve the recommendation to add one additional object to CAMRA's Articles of Association:

6) To act as the voice and represent the interests of all pub goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers.

The changes will see CAMRA put increased focus on educating members (and non-members) about different types of beer. It also sees campaigning for real cider and perry added to the objects for the first time, as well as recognising pub and club protection as a key object for the organisation.

As well as attending the AGM and voting on special resolutions, there was a conference, fringe activities, and evening visits to local breweries or towns. Between activities there was a well stocked members' bar selling a large selection of locally brewed beers.



***Colin Valentine (centre) stepped down as Chairman following the conference to be replaced by Jackie Parker (right)***

Prominent West Midlands CAMRA members who we have recently sadly lost were honoured at the start and end of the AGM.

Sarah Edmondson, one of the stalwarts



of the Campaign, recently died after a short illness. Sarah worked at every Great British Beer Festival since the Alexandra Palace days, judged Champion Beer of Britain finalists and sat on the final panel. In addition she worked at 40 Wolverhampton Beer Festivals and was the organiser of six of them.

Sally Lavender, who we paid tribute to in our Spring issue, was also honoured when she was awarded Campaigner of The Year, recognising all she did for CAMRA. It was fitting that she was given a standing ovation when a surprised and humble Mark Parkes, her partner, stepped up to receive the award on her behalf.

Last year's Campaigner Of The Year winner, Lyn Sharpe was also from the Midlands and was a friend of Sally's. You can spot her on the front page in her specially adapted CAMRA dress.

The conference activities began on Saturday after the AGM, and continued on Sunday. This was where proposals for new or modified policies were put forward for official ratification from CAMRA's National Executive.

While the AGM proposals were voted on by the entire membership, only those in attendance could vote on the conference motions with a show of hands.

Some of the issues debated and decided upon were:

### **Better choice at beer festivals**

CAMRA festivals have been given the opportunity to widen their appeal to all drinkers by offering a wider range of beers and other products - including non-real ales.

Members voted to approve the removal of wording in the organisation's policy

document which said festivals should only stock real ale, cider and perry. They also agreed to a motion calling for festivals which offered other types of beer to provide educational material about all beer types on sale.

The key message to come out of this debate was that branches are trusted, and in control of their beer festivals.

### **Equality and diversity**

Members voted to approve a motion calling for the National Executive to set equality and diversity targets, and report back on progress annually.

### **Small Brewery Duty Relief**

CAMRA members overwhelmingly **rejected** a motion to campaign for a reduction in Small Brewery Duty Relief, coupled with an increase in the bar-relage on which it is granted.



***CAMRA members vote on the conference motions on Sunday***

### **Don't demand discounts**

Members clearly supported a motion stating a belief that pubs and breweries should not be expected to give discounts, and criticised when they failed to do so - but recognised the freedom of pubs and breweries to offer discounts if they wished.

Buster Grant, brewery owner and former chairman of the Small Independent Brewers Association (SIBA) told the Conference that there was increasing

financial pressure on publicans and brewers and that it seemed perverse that some members of CAMRA insisted on demanding a discount.

He added: "Not only is this culture eroding the margins that can be earned but it threatens the stability of the supply chain and counters the aims of this organisation. It also creates a negative feeling about CAMRA."

There were no speakers against the motion, which was clearly carried.

### **CAMRA now neutral on "cask breathers"**

Members decided to change CAMRA's policy on "cask breathers" - devices used in pub cellars to lengthen the life of cask beers by ensuring a blanket of carbon dioxide preserves the beer. Previously against such devices, the motion called on the Campaign to end its opposition to their use

National Director Ben Wilkinson said: "This motion is about giving more freedom to CAMRA's branches. There are lots of pubs across the UK which cannot be placed in the Good Beer Guide (GBG) because of our policy. This will allow pubs to be included in the GBG based on the quality of the beer and the pub. There is a lot of confusion about cask breathers which is simply not true. They improve the quality of beer and that is all that they do. Let's trust branches and our local members to assess quality of beers on merit."

### **More education on the use of return trays (auto-vacs)**

There were two separate motions on return trays, resulting in a clear direction. Members instructed the National Executive to liaise with the relevant bodies to press for mandatory notices

on the use of return trays to be prominently displayed at the point of sale in affected premises. They also instructed the National Executive to arrange for suitable information on the use of these devices to be posted on What Pub and in the Good Beer Guide (including the GBG app) for all affected establishments.

*Editors note: I am not aware of these devices, which recycle overspills into the dispensing pump, being used in the Midlands. Use is mainly in Yorkshire and Scotland.*

### **Opposition to supply ties**

Members passed a motion to revise wording in the External Policy Document, to make it clear that CAMRA opposes the imposition of supply ties on publicans by property owners, that restrict the choices, sources and affordability of the beer, cider and perry that they can sell to their customers.

### **Symbol to denote un-fined beer?**

In one of the more lively debates, the motion calling for the National Executive to lobby, and work with the pub and brewing industry to create and apply a clear symbol to indicate if a beer is unfinned at the point of sale, was remitted to the National Executive to develop a proposed way forward.

It was clear (no pun intended) that giving the customer more information on the expected appearance of a beer is a good thing. The question is how to do it. Some brewers and pubs have their own method of denoting un-fined beer. Therefore, adding yet another symbol could add to costs without an associated benefit. There are also varying degrees of haziness between different types of beer.

*photos from CAMRA What's Brewing*



## Winner of Solihull & District CAMRA Club Of The Year 2017

Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club offers a warm & comfortable environment in which to enjoy your favourite ales. 3 guest beers on every week with varieties changing all the time - we have members' favourites Salopian, Oakham and St Austell regularly and the bar manager is always open to suggestions for new ales.



The bar is open every day, featuring Sky TV with sporting events such as Six Nations Rugby, Premiership Football and, naturally, Cricket being shown. In the summer you can relax with your favourite ale watching Birmingham Premier League Cricket with many past and present county players on view. K&D's 1st XI were crowned CHAMPIONS of the Birmingham & District Premier Cricket League in 2017, which was a great achievement for the club. K&D have pulled off two major signings for 2018 of international superstar Ian Bell and the re-signing of New Zealand's international all-rounder George Worker.

While the club is a private members club, and is popular on match days, there is no charge for admission, and guests who are CAMRA members are welcome at any time on production of a CAMRA membership card. Social membership is also available which comes with a discount entitlement at the bar to make your favourite beers even better value.



**Station Road  
Dorridge  
B93 8ET  
Tel 01564 774338**



## Opening Hours:

Mon-Thurs 5.30pm - 10.30pm  
Fridays: 5.30pm - 11.00pm  
Saturdays 12.00noon - 11.00pm  
Sundays 12.00 noon - 10.30pm

Website : [knowleanddorridgecc.co.uk](http://knowleanddorridgecc.co.uk)  
Email: [knowledorridgecc@gmail.com](mailto:knowledorridgecc@gmail.com)  
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# Hail to the Ale!

## *Local Beer, Pub, Club & Brewery news*

The **Black Swan** in Henley In Arden has closed "until further notice". It looks like the pub is undergoing a change of ownership.

The **Hobs Meadow** is now owned by Heineken following the sale of Punch Taverns. It is being advertised as "To Let" on the Star Pubs & Bars website, and there is a sign on the side of the pub.

The **Durham Ox** in Shrewley is undergoing a major refurbishment. Estimated completion could be around the middle of June. You can keep up to date with developments on Facebook or Instagram.

The **Harvester** in Tanhouse Farm Road has closed. We aren't aware of why, nor if it is planned to re-open.

**Missoula**, which only recently started selling real ale, closed on March 18th.

We have two new real ale outlets in our area. The **Lake At Barston** now sells Doom Bar, and the **Harvester restaurant in Shirley** also sells Doom Bar.

Silhill brewery now sell bottles through **Connolly's** and **Selfridges**, as well as **Bernies Real Ale Off Licence**. The hunt for a new location continues, but could soon be at an end. Watch this space for news when we have some to share.

**Tom O The Wood** had a refresh in February this year. The outside furniture is all new, the inside and outside have a new paint job, and the bar itself has been refurbished. On a recent visit Doom Bar and Church Farm Harry's Heifer were on sale.

Good news from the **Rowington Club**. It looks like the August beer festival is back this year, although the date is to be confirmed. The previous festivals clashed with Henley Music Weekend on August Bank Holiday. It will be a mini beer festival with local beers. If any local brewers or CAMRA members would like to suggest beers please contact Adrian at the club (number on the advert on page 30).

The phase 1 refurbishment went well in June resulting in a new brighter bar area (see photo below). The other rooms will be refurbished in phase 2 and finally the games room in phase 3. You can now also use the barbeque equipment there, just bring your food along. Membership details on page 30.



The **Indian Brewery** is reported to be opening a new restaurant in Station Road near Turtle Bay during August. The Solihull venue will seat up to 50 people, offering Indian brewery beers and the same menu as Birmingham. Indian Brewery opened on Livery Street, Birmingham, in January 2017 and has recently been expanded after proving to be a great success. It should be a welcome addition to the centre of Solihull.



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Solihull  
B92 7LY  
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*The Lyndon*

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Hot food available  
(excluding Mondays)  
Free function room to  
hire for all occasions  
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**All World Cup Games on  
Large HD Screens**



**The Lyndon Pub Solihull**



**Opening Hours:**

**Sun – Wed: 12.00pm – 11:30pm**

**Thu – Fri: 12.00pm – 12.00am**

**Sat: 12.00pm – 1.00am**

## The Vaults Gets A New Look

The Vaults in Knowle closed for a week in March this year, and when it re-opened it had been totally transformed. It now looks so much larger from the outside with more presence, as you can see from the photo below.

Inside, everything has been renewed from the front of the bar, carpets, flooring, toilets and furniture.

As well as being so much brighter on



the inside, you can learn about the history of the Vaults from 1889, when it was the Midland Bank (hence the Vaults name).

There is a quirky feel to it, from the writing on the floor to a set of special edition beermats (collectors take note), and some unique banknotes!

Watch out on Facebook for “Meet The Brewer” events and beer festivals, as it builds on its 30 year real ale heritage.



# 10,000 Beers, Still Sober and Still Counting

Back in the early 1990s we were in the process of moving house and I discovered a drawer full of old beer festival programmes. Like most festival goers, I had marked off the beers that we had tried, so I decided to have a count up to see how many different ales we had sampled. The beer lists went back to our first ever Great British Beer Festival held at Alexandra Palace in 1978. Wanting to make space, and having just acquired a PC, we decided to set up a beers database listing all the ales tasted, along with details of where and when. It took a while to add all the beers to the database as there were probably about 800 to 900 consumed over a period of over 10 years. Having done that, I was at least able to dispose of the drawer full of old programmes thus gaining a fair few brownie points in the process.

Going forward, we started to make a note of all the beers we tried as we visited pubs and festivals around the country. Not being a great note taker, this job tended to fall to Brenda who always carried a notebook in her handbag. Soon we had passed the 2,000 mark, despite my regularly forgetting to record a fair few when out with the lads. As new breweries started to spring up in the late 1990s, it got much easier to find unusual beers, even in our local pubs in Knowle and Solihull (sometimes!). However, festivals were still the best way to seek out new beers, so we attended as many as we could in the local area. At that time there were a number of "Tickers" actively seeking to try huge numbers of beers in a short time, often attending 3 or 4 festivals over one weekend! We

did not have the time, or the liver capacity, to do that so our progress towards 5,000 was gradual. In fact, some time later, we realised we had passed the 5,000 mark without realising and marking the occasion. As 10,000 was the next major landmark, it was going to be a long and difficult job (but someone has to do it!)



***Allan and Brenda Reach 10,000 Beers***

Trying so many different beers did involve a degree of hardship believe it or not. We often decided to try beer styles we weren't keen on (mainly un-fined or flavoured ones), and often avoided the ones we really liked, in order to add to our total. However, when ales from Oakham, Slater's or Thornbridge were available, it was difficult to avoid trying them again.

Some years later, we started to approach the magic 10,000 mark, so this time we tried to plan out when and where we would finally get our total to 5 figures. At the start of 2018 we stood at 9,960, so we began to look ahead to forthcoming festivals where we might reach the target. Sadly, we were unable to make the 2 big ones



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(Manchester & Norwich) due to holidays, and even more sadly were unable to get to Coventry as local buses were not running due to snow. As a result, it took a bit longer to reach the threshold and the fast approaching Solihull CAMRA weekend away in Hampshire was looking favourite, as we were due to visit a large number of pubs in the 3 days. And yes, on March 9th in the Wykeham Arms in Winchester, we finally reached the 10,000 mark with a very tasty half of Flowerpots Gooden's Gold. One of our group kindly took a photo to mark the occasion.

We'll probably continue with our quest but having reached this point, I doubt

we will be able to continue with such enthusiasm. However, you never know, in 10 years time I may be writing about our 15,000th beer.



*Allan Duffy*





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A BREWERY  
TOUR  
FOR TEN PEOPLE AT  
HOOK  
NORTON







ON ALES



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1849

**HOOK NORTON**

**BREWERY**

## Book Review— CAMRA's Good Beer Guide Belgium

CAMRA have just published the 8th edition of the Good Beer Guide Belgium.

First published in 1992, it is acknowledged as the standard work for Belgian beer lovers. Tim Webb, one of the authors, has written for all 8 editions so there is a continuity, despite the latest edition being fully revised and updated.

Based on over 20 years of research, this is not just a beer guide, as when you open it, you will see it is a cultural journey as well, with many photographs that capture not only the essence of Belgian beers, but Belgium itself.

The introductory pages read a bit like a travel guide with a bit of history, and how to get there with details of specialist Belgian beer tour companies included, covering travel by coach, bicycle, or even barge. Food lovers will also appreciate the guide to Belgian food specialities.

However, the vast majority of the book is devoted to beer, and what makes Belgian beer culture special. Before reading this book I was unaware that UNESCO had awarded Belgium's beer culture the status of "intangible cultural heritage", as something worthy of protection.

What was also surprising was the range of different Belgian beer styles, described over 20 pages, giving examples of each type to try.

Unlike the annual CAMRA Good Beer Guide for the UK, the breweries are listed first, and are rated from "among the world's best breweries" down to the "the beer ticker's burden". Like the UK version the information in this guide relies on a wide range of volunteers making a valued input. The brewery

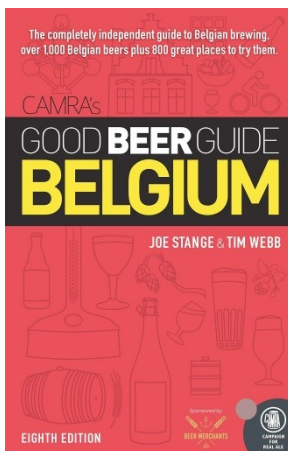
section itself comprises nearly 100 pages, giving details of the breweries themselves and examples of their beers, over 1000 in total.

The "where to find beer" section takes up around half the book, and covers not just Belgium itself, but specialist Belgian beer stockists throughout Europe. Unlike the UK guide, this book includes pictures of local sights and some of the 800 bars listed, making it a very attractive publication to read.

The maps of the city centres are particularly useful if you are planning a city visit. Locations are shown for unlisted bars as well as those listed. What struck me was the close proximity of many of the city centre bars. For instance in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, and others, multiple bars within one square kilometre! This makes planning a bar crawl quite easy on time and the legs.

The final section contains details of regular beer festivals and events.

Now that I have the book, thoughts turn to a future trip to sample some of the delights highlighted. If you're planning a trip yourself this book is a must!



Good Beer Guide Belgium by CAMRA Books.

Published April 16th 2018

ISBN 9781 85249 3417

£14.99 through [shop.camra.org.uk](http://shop.camra.org.uk)

(Discount price available for CAMRA members)

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## Health Warning Headlines Rejected

MODERATE drinkers shouldn't be worried by recent shock media reports stating drinking more than five glasses of wine or beer a week was dangerous. Research from the University of Cambridge and the British Heart Foundation, which looked at 600,000 drinkers across the world, was claimed to have discovered anything more than five glasses of wine, or pints of beer, is dangerous to health, and could be knocking years off a person's lifespan.

It's not so, said Drinkers' Voice director Dr Richard Harding, saying the headlines do not match the facts. Harding said: "A lot of research has been carried out over the last 40 years which is really consistent in its findings. It finds that moderate consumers of alcohol

find they are protected from heart disease through quite a significant degree compared with abstainers. The drop in the risk is large; between 20-40 per cent. At first sight, this study seems to be an outlier to those findings but the detail of the results actually show that the never drinkers fared worse than even the heavy drinkers in this study. Once again, this is another story about drinking where shock headlines don't match up with the detail of the findings." *Source: Whats Brewing May 2018*

*Drinkers' Voice is network of people across the UK who enjoy drinking moderately as part of a healthy lifestyle. They want to bring normal people back into the debate about drinking to counter anti-alcohol campaigners who want to stop you enjoying a drink. <https://drinkersvoice.org.uk/>*

# Do You Want Printed “Beer” and “What’s Brewing”

CAMRA is changing the way it delivers Whats Brewing (WB) and Beer, regular publications sent out to members. It will no longer automatically assume all members want a printed copy, but will still print and post you copies of the publications if you want to continue to receive them.

More than 100,000 publications a month are currently sent out by post to members. This costs the Campaign a large amount of money, and it also has a large environmental cost. Research suggests a large proportion of the copies CAMRA print and post are unwanted and unread. Digital versions of these magazines are made available at [wb.camra.org.uk](http://wb.camra.org.uk). In addition the [wb.camra.org.uk](http://wb.camra.org.uk) website provides regularly updated news.

If you’ve already opted out of getting publications by post, or are happy to

access them online in future, you don’t need to do anything.

If you’d like to continue to get the paper publications, just get in touch.

**Online:** log into the Members’ Section at [camra.org.uk](http://camra.org.uk) with your membership number and password. Click “edit my membership information” then “amend my details”. Under the “preferences” tab you can switch WB and/or BEER back to “by post” **By phone:** call 0330 058 3130 and follow the automated instructions to change your WB/BEER preference **By email:** send an email to [membership@camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@camra.org.uk) with the subject “BEER/WB Preferences” and indicate if you still want to receive BEER, WB, or both, by post **Write:** send your membership number and preference for receiving WB, BEER or both by post to: Membership Contact Preferences, 203 Hatfield Road, St Albans Herts, AL1 4LW.

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## Solihull Pubs & Clubs CAMRA Member Discounts

Ember Inns (**Fieldhouse, Colebrook, Woodmans Rest, Olton Tavern, Red Lion Knowle**) - 20p/ pint except Mondays where all cask ales are £2.49.

**Fieldhouse** additionally gives 20% off food with a discount card available from the bar. For other offers see the advert on page 15.

**Flute and Flagon** gives 10% off real ales (may not applicable when other low price promotions are taking place).

**The Lyndon** give 20p/pint except Thursdays when a pint is £2.70. Also 5% off food for card carrying members.

**Drum and Monkey, Wharf Tavern, The Greswolde Arms,** give 10% off real ales

Vintage Inns (**Red Lion Earlswood**) 20p/ pint

The **Ale Rooms, Knowle** 50p/pint or 50p/ half pint

Please note that any discounts given to CAMRA members are at the discretion of the licensee, and these may be withdrawn at any time. They are a privilege given to card carrying CAMRA members as a gesture of goodwill.

CAMRA believes that no CAMRA member or Branch should ask for, or expect, a discount from any pub or brewery (see page 9 of this issue).



## Win Yourself a Microbrewery

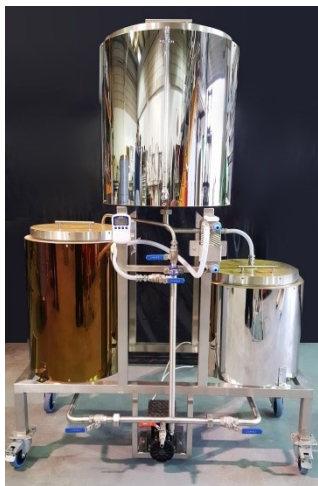
Following a successful Charity raffle a couple of years ago, Elite Stainless Fabrications of Swindon are again offering the chance to win your own microbrewery for only £5.

The prize is a special edition 60 litre micro brewery, with a runner up prize donated by Brewhouse and Kitchen.

Proceeds will be evenly split between Phab Kids and Swindon Down's Syndrome Group.

To enter visit [www.esfabrications.co.uk/news](http://www.esfabrications.co.uk/news). The prize draw takes place on the 25th August 2018 at the Crown Inn, Stratton.

If you are interested in brewing some beer yourself it may well be worth entering.



The Solihull Drinker is the quarterly newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed in the Drinker are not necessarily those of the Branch or CAMRA.



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

Contributions, comments and advertising enquiries should be sent to Solihull Drinker Editor, 2 Dunton Hall Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2RA; or via email to

**[davidcove@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:davidcove@hotmail.co.uk)**

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The Editor has the right to amend or shorten any items in the newsletter, but will always honour the spirit & intention of the contribution.

## THE BLUE BELL CIDER HOUSE

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## Great British Beer Festival London 2018

The Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) is back in London this summer from the 7th-11th August at London Olympia.

Organised and run by the Campaign for Real Ale, the Great British Beer Festival is one of the biggest, most exciting and well-known events on the beer and cider calendar. With over 900 real ales, ciders, perries, and one-off speciality brews, spread over no fewer than 30 bars, this year's festival is not one to be missed.

Standard tickets start from as little as £9 for CAMRA members or £11 for non-members. There will also be VIP packages available, and season tickets which cover entry for every session except the trade session, at £24 for members or £29 for non members.

Planet Rock, the largest rock radio station in the UK, is partnering with the GBBF to bring a whole day of unforgettable entertainment to this year's event. They will be bringing a number of bands to entertain festival-goers on the Thursday session. This is in addition to the regular music line up throughout the week of the festival.

All CAMRA members receive a discount on tickets to GBBF. If you haven't received an email with your discount code, email your membership number to [gbbf@camra.org.uk](mailto:gbbf@camra.org.uk) and the team will get a code to you. For more on the Great British Beer Festival visit [gbbf.org.uk](http://gbbf.org.uk), or follow @gbbf on Twitter or @greatbritishbeerfestival on Facebook.

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# CAMRA Names Best Cider and Perry in Britain

Following more than a year of local tasting panels and regional heats, Harry's Scrummage has been named the best cider in the country and Nempnett Piglet's Choice has won best perry at CAMRA's prestigious National Cider and Perry Championships.

Scrummage impressed judges with "a sharp but easy drinking cider that stretches to a long lingering and pleasant aftertaste", while Piglet's Choice took the crown for "a well balanced perry with a clean and fruity taste."

The winners were honoured at the Reading Beer and Cider Festival, which took place from 3rd-6th May at Christchurch Meadows in Caversham. The home of the National Cider and Perry Championships, the festival features over 550 beers, and 150 ciders and perries, plus a selection of foreign beers, wines, and mead.

Each cider and perry in the competition is judged on its individual taste, aroma, flavour, after-taste and overall appeal. The top awards were selected by a specially chosen panel of both experienced and novice judges.

Speaking after the win, Harry Fry of Harry's Cider said: "I'm overwhelmed and really excited about this accolade. It's a huge achievement for the whole of the Harry's team.

"I hope everyone enjoys the cider as much as we do."

Keith Balch of Nempnett Cider Company added: "It's fantastic news and just shows what great products you can make from 100-year-old orchards."

As CAMRA celebrates 30 years of campaigning for real cider, cider-lovers

continue to rejoice following a recent vote by its members to secure the long-term future of real cider and perry.

Andrea Briers, CAMRA National Cider and Perry Committee Chairman, says: "Huge congratulations to Harry's and Nempnett's for taking home the golds with their Scrummage and Piglet's Choice respectively.

"While CAMRA has supported and campaigned for quality real cider and perry for over 30 years, the recent vote to support the long-term future of cider and perry has made these products firmly part of our campaign, alongside quality real ale. This is fantastic news for cider drinkers across the country who want to see quality, traditional cider and perry made from apples and pears form part of our future."

The winners were:

## Cider

GOLD –Harry's, Scrummage (Somerset)

SILVER – Whin Hill, Browns (Norfolk)

BRONZE – Orgasmic, White Jersey (Herefordshire)

## Perry

GOLD – Nempnett Cider Company, Piglet's Choice (Somerset)

SILVER – Oliver's, Perry (Herefordshire)

BRONZE – Whin Hill, Perry (Norfolk)

*Source: CAMRA Press Release*

*If you like your cider and perry look no further than the next Wetherspoons Cider Festival normally held in July. At the time of going to press we didn't have any firm details, but you can participate in our area at either of the pubs advertised on the next page.*



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## Wolverhampton Midweek Crawl

You think you know a city's pubs pretty well until someone else takes you around. Then you discover pubs you never knew could be so good, or ones recently opened that you were not aware of. Such was the case when Steve Myatt took the lead on this tour of Wolverhampton.

Our first stop was the Hogshead in Stafford Street. A typical, large, late nineteenth century street corner pub and one of the Stonegate stable of pubs. It has 10 handpumps of which 7 were in use at the time of our visit. Beers from Timothy Taylor, 2 from Amber Ales, 2 from Gloucester Brewery Leatherbritches, and my choice Tiny Rebel Juicy, a "tropical golden ale" as the pumpclip says. At 4.8% it's quite strong for a golden ale, but was very nice if a little on the warm side. The pub has been opened out following a refurbishment some years ago. Food is also available.



***Starting off at the Hogshead.***

Our next port of call, just a few steps away, was the Hooded Ram on Lichfield Street. Another street corner pub built in the early 1900s, it used to be a bank. In the 1980s it was converted

into a Marston's pub, and was taken over by the Hooded Ram Brewery from the Isle of Man in 2017. Like the Hogshead, we were faced with 10 handpumps, not all of them in use. Hooded Ram beers were Green Hop, Mosaic, Cascade, Dark Rider and Amber Ram, a good representation of the styles produced by the brewery. I tried both the Mosaic and Cascade, as I am an American hop fanatic, and enjoyed them immensely. This pub was a surprise to me and, although less homely than the Hogshead, the beers more than compensated.



***Range of different Rams on the bar***

Just around the corner is the Posada, a well-known Wolverhampton ale house with a tiled entrance, small bar, and large rear lounge. A longstanding Good Beer Guide entry it had a good range of beers; Hobson's Town Crier, Green Duck's Duck Blonde, and Holden's Black Country Bitter. I sampled the Green Duck, pleasant enough but rather soft on the palate as most golden ales tend to be. Food next, so we popped over to Wetherspoons Moon Under Water.

After filling our stomachs we wandered up to the Lych Gate Tavern, a Black



Country Ales pub in Queens Square. A small pub, it has a thoroughly traditional interior although it has only been a pub for 6 years. 2 small rooms with a bar supported 10 handpumps, all of which were in use. Salcombe, Little John, Wimbledon, Golden Duck, Bradfield, and Salopian breweries were on tap. I tried Salopian's Lemon Dream but unfortunately it was not at its best. Three Black Country Ales were also available as well as a real cider. I really like this pub, being very comfortable, and a very welcome break from modern, café style bars.



***The entrance to the Lych Gate***

So we moved on to another surprise to me: Slaters Brewery pub close by, still in Queens Square, aptly named Slaters. In contrast to the Lych Gate this is a modern bar in every sense of the word, and can feel a little "cold" unless packed with people. Still, a welcome addition to the Wolverhampton pub scene. 10 handpumps on the bar but only 4 were in use. Lytham Brewery Witch Wood, Stockport Jester, together with Slaters Columbia Coffee Stout and Haka. I went for the Jester as it was a golden ale brewed with a new hop punch. Craft beers also have a noticeable presence here.

Last pub of the day was the Great Western. However, on our way I popped my head around the Dog and Doublet in North Street to see 6 handpumps: one to visit at another time.



***Finishing the day at the Great Western***

Catching up with the rest of the crew we soon arrived at the Great Western below the arches of Wolverhampton railway station. Known to all West Midlands CAMRA members of a certain age, this traditional corner pub is not easy to find for your first visit.

Owned by Holden's Brewery it has a small bar and snug, with log fires in winter. A large restaurant area at the back is open at lunchtimes only, with hot pork baps and other delights available at other times. At the time of our visit, beers on tap were Holden's Golden Glow, Black Country Bitter and Special. Guests were Beowulf Double Decade, Woodlands Milk Stout, and Kinver Khyber. I went for the Beowulf and the Golden Glow, a beer which I have only recently come to appreciate.

So ended our day with an accolade of thanks for Steve Myatt for taking the helm.

*Steve Dyson*



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# ROWINGTON CLUB

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Contact the Club Steward Adrian Cotton on:

**01564 782087**

[rowingtonclub@live.co.uk](mailto:rowingtonclub@live.co.uk)

[facebook.com/RowingtonSocialClub](https://www.facebook.com/RowingtonSocialClub)



Rowington Club, Rowington Green, Rowington, Warwick CV35 7DB

# Membership Matters

You will have read earlier in this edition about the changes agreed at this year's national AGM.

You can become a CAMRA member yourself and join 191,000 other like minded individuals, with a liking for real ale and pubs, by going to the CAMRA website [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk). There is also a comprehensive list of other benefits you get by becoming a member. Maybe you could help us shape the brewing and pub landscape for the next generation to enjoy real ale, cider & perry in well run pubs and clubs throughout the country.

I have just returned from a weekend break in Glasgow, and managed to visit 6 of their branch listed Good Beer Guide (GBG) pubs. I was really surprised at the interesting range of ales I was able to sample. Obviously many were from Scotland, but some were from Devon, North Wales, and Nottingham, all in good condition.

All of the GBG pubs have been surveyed by CAMRA members to justify

their inclusion into the UK's best selling beer guide. If you were a member of our branch you could be recommending a local pub for inclusion in the guide, or maybe joining us on one of our organised social events where we visit pubs and clubs in the region to sample the beers available.

So come on, what are you waiting for? Membership starts from as little as £25 per year, which works out at about 48p per week. How about giving a years membership as a gift for Fathers Day on 17th June?

All new members who join, and live within the Solihull & District CAMRA branch boundary, will receive a voucher for a FREE PINT contained within their welcome pack. This is redeemable in conjunction with a valid membership card upon attendance at their first Branch meeting, courtesy of Solihull & District CAMRA Branch. For details of the next branch meeting see the Dates for your Diary section.

*Dave Mckowen*

| <b><i>Useful Contact Numbers</i></b> |               | <b><i>Socials</i></b>                        |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--|---------------|
| <b><i>Chairman</i></b>               |               | Paul Wigley                                  | 07402 312457  |
| Carl Wright                          | 0121 603 1621 | <b><i>Pubs Campaigning/Beer Festival</i></b> |               |
| <b><i>Secretary</i></b>              |               | Martin Buck                                  | 01564 770708  |
| Allan Duffy                          | 01564 200431  | <b><i>Solihull Drinker Editor</i></b>        |               |
| <b><i>Membership</i></b>             |               | David Cove                                   | 0121 603 6057 |
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