

**SOCIETY for the PRESERVATION of  
BEERS from the WOOD**  
*(founded 1963)*

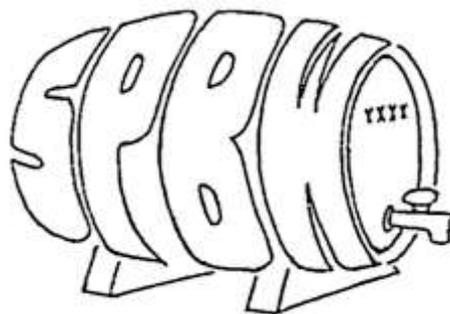
***PINT in HAND***

*Number 104*

*November 2007*



*The Harp in Covent Garden – voted best pub in London (see page 4)*



## ***PINT in HAND***

- ***Pint in Hand*** is published quarterly, in February, May, August and November. It is issued to all subscribing members and affiliated branches of SPBW.
- All members are invited to contribute articles for publication on beer-related subjects. Contributions for the February 2008 issue should reach the Editor by **20 January**.
- The Editor or the National Executive Committee of SPBW does not necessarily share opinions expressed in *Pint in Hand*.

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Anyone reading this that is not already a member of SPBW might like to know that annual membership costs only £5 (£6 non-UK). For information about SPBW together with a membership form, please send a stamped addressed envelope to the National Membership Secretary as above.

## ***OPENING TIME***

I've just been reading a story in the Guardian about how beer sales have declined to the lowest level since the 1930s. There's been a remarkable 49% drop in beer sales in pubs since a peak in 1979 – some 14 million pints fewer a day. Is there any coincidence in the fact that in the same period the duty on beer has risen by 27%? (By way of comparison, duty on wine has risen by just 16% and consumption is up by 46%.)

It won't help that the recent wet summer, with its effect on the harvest, means that raw material prices will rise, not to mention the cost of oil for transport and aluminium for packaging. And of course it's the poor old consumer who has to pick up the tab for all this. As I wrote in the last issue, higher drinks prices in pubs won't solve any binge-drinking problems; all it would do is drive customers out of pubs (and obviously, pub drinking is less in vogue than ever), meaning further price increases to compensate. And fewer people drinking in pubs means less of a beer market, and it won't be the major producers who suffer the most.

If there is any consolation it comes in a quote from a spokesperson for a beer consumers' body based in St Albans, who says there has been a 7.5% year-on-year growth in sales of regional beers. I'm sure there is a greater potential market for hand crafted ales, if only the consumer can find them. While a huge proportion of the country's pubs are owned by the likes of Punch Taverns, there will always be a restriction on true consumer choice.

Those of us who took part in the latest National Weekend (from which I'm trying to dry out!) had the pleasure of visiting two small breweries – Titanic and Woodlands – whose output is a tiny fraction of the major operators, but who both brew a good range of tasty ales and clearly enjoy doing so. Thankfully both breweries have a good number of outlets for their beers in the Potteries, Cheshire and beyond.

It's now 30 years since I first joined SPBW and it's amazing to think of how the beer scene has changed in that time. The 'enemy' in those days was the notorious 'Big 6' brewers and it's interesting to read that the one survivor of that group – Scottish & Newcastle – are having to fight off a hostile bid from Carlsberg and Heineken, with Anheuser Busch and SABMiller awaiting developments with interest. According to the Good Beer Guide, S & N has 30% of the British beer market, yet its four breweries produce just two real beers – and one of them is for Theakston. This leaves just John Smith's bitter, which I imagine is not on too many of your favourites list.

Apologies for this issue's slightly delayed appearance, due to Chris Callow (who organises the printing) spending most of November in the USA celebrating his 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. I'm grateful as ever to Chris for his help and – as it's that time of year – I'd like to record my thanks to everyone who has contributed to Pint in Hand. Season's best wishes to all SPBW members as well as brewers and publicans who take pride in their profession. Cheers!

*Roger*

## ***NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE***

The SPBW National Executive Committee holds its regular meetings on the second Monday of each month, starting at 7 pm or thereabouts, in the Royal Oak, Tabard Street, London SE1. If we're lucky we use the upstairs room (it's quieter but further from the bar). These are strictly business meetings, but they are kept as brief as necessary. All members are welcome to attend, particularly representatives from branches.

## ***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

The SPBW National Executive Committee will hold its 2008 AGM on **Monday 10 March**, probably at the Royal Oak. Full details will appear in the next issue of PiH, on the SPBW website and via our email information network. Our AGMs are usually short and informal business meetings, with plenty of opportunity for socialising.

Anyone who is interested in taking a post on the NEC should contact John Rooth (page 2).

## ***LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR***

**The Harp** in Covent Garden has been voted SPBW's London Pub of the Year. Runners up in a very strong competition are the Bricklayers Arms, Putney, and the Willoughby Arms, Kingston.

We will present the award at the Harp on Thursday 17 January, 19.30 for 20.00. I hope we'll see plenty of SPBW members there; the pub's address is 47 Chandos Place, WC2N 4HS.

The Harp is a former Charrington house known as the Welsh Harp until it was 'denationalised' a few years back. It's very close to Trafalgar Square, Charing Cross and London's theatreland, which helps to account for the pub's popularity. Added to the fact that it's a fairly small, one-room pub (with a former no-smoking room upstairs, it does tend to get very crowded. Have no fear about getting served, the Harp can boast the most efficient and friendly (all female) bar staff I know of. What they will serve you might be one of the regular ales: Taylor's Landlord, Black Sheep bitter and Harvey's Best or one of three guests; as an example, when we were there to judge the pub these were Mordue IPA, Skinner Cornish Knocker and GK Olde Trip. You can rest assured that the beer quality is first class (in fact, the licensees, Bridget and Sarah, have recently been awarded Cask Marque status. To wash down the beers the pub offers a selection of premium quality, fresh, locally sourced, gourmet award winning sausages. The Harp has its own website:

<http://www.harpbarcoventgarden.com> if you want to make a virtual visit. But there's no substitute for the real thing!

## **NATIONAL WEEKEND**

The 2007 National Weekend was another success with some 18 members from around the country enjoying some excellent beers in some very fine pubs. Most of our time was spent in Cheshire, with a brief excursion to the Potteries to visit Titanic Brewery. We also had the pleasure of visiting the Woodlands Brewery in Wrenbury and enjoying some of their fine ales. A fuller account will feature in the next issue of PiH. If anyone has ideas for future venues please let us know!



*Thirsty members wait for the Harrington Arms, Gawsorth to open*

## **RANDOM EVENTS**

The latest beer & buffet event at the Wenlock Arms in October was well attended as ever by members from far and near. We challenged our taste buds on Alasdair's curry and chilli with some excellent ales to douse the fire. Our representation at beer festivals continues: the usual team of Bill, John and Mike manned the stand at the Sutton/Wallington event in October. In early December we make a return visit to the Pig's Ear (4 – 8<sup>th</sup>) at the Ocean, Mare Street, opposite Hackney Town Hall. Come along and say hello and buy a few of our products.

## **TONY LITTLER TROPHY**

This is the inter-branch competition named in Tony's memory: he was a stalwart of the SPBW and member of a number until his tragic death in 1984. The next contest will be held on **Thursday 22 February** 2008 at the **Calthorpe Arms**, 252 Grays Inn Road. This is a small but perfectly formed Youngs house renowned for friendly service and well kept ales; the fun will happen in the upstairs function room; there will be small charge for a buffet. As of now we expect the competition will be some combination of darts and a quiz. All branches are welcome to enter a team (but note that the winning team must organise the next event in a London pub); any SPBW who's not a member of any branch will also be welcome to come along.

## **'ARRY HART 1944 - 2007**

It is with deep regret that we report the death of 'Arry Hart after a long illness bravely borne without complaint. 'Arry was a stalwart of the SPBW, active in several branches - Campden Hill, notably, Woolwich and Ponds - and his input and advice on the organisation of events and the running of the branches was always very much sought after. Although probably not noted as a darts player, he is a former winner of the Keith Hudson trophy, and I seem to recall that his wide beer knowledge enabled his team to win the Tony Littler trophy, despite carrying forward zero points from the darts portion of the competition. For the younger members 'Arry was always a font of all knowledge about the history and traditions of the Society, and those mattered to him and he was always very keen to uphold their integrity and ensure that things were done properly and for good reason.

It was at 'Arry's insistence that we computerised our membership database and thus were able to print out labels for despatch in an efficient manner. 'Arry designed the database and advised on the required software and hardware.

There haven't been many social events over the last 20 years in the many beer groups that 'Arry was associated with, in which he wasn't a part, either as an organiser or as an enthusiastic participant and the SPBW, Camal, Camra and The Ring will all be poorer for his absence, but richer for his contribution.

However it is as a person that we shall miss 'Arry, he was a true and loyal friend, a quiet, dignified man who never caused offence to anyone, and whose friendship, advice and opinions were always highly valued.

Beer is something which often loosens the tongue, and elicits unnecessary verbal salvos, but in all the years I have known 'Arry, I can't remember any occasions when alcohol caused him to lose his dignity, his gravitas, or his innate decorum.

Our deepest sympathy, thoughts and condolences go out to Sue at this very sad time. May He Rest in Peace

*John Rooth*

'Arry, though somewhat reserved, was well-liked and respected in the beer movement. Together with Sue, to whom we extend our sympathies, he was a familiar figure at all sorts of beer-related events both here and abroad.

A Bristolian, 'Arry was a graduate of Bath University, where he met Sue. He went on to become a PA (his description of his role as a Public Analyst). After taking early retirement he travelled widely and I used to receive postcards from various exotic places, such as the locations of Camra AGMs. I will not be alone in missing his dry humour and generosity.

*Richard Graham*

I can only echo the sentiments of John and Richard. 'Arry's funeral was very well attended, with many of his friends from SPBW and Camra in evidence. Afterwards we moved on to the Sultan in South Wimbledon ('Arry and Sue's local) to pay our respects in the traditional manner with excellent Hop Back beers.

*RJ*

## **HUGH DEARY**

Hugh, a long standing member of the West Riding branch, passed away at the begging of May this year aged 72. He joined the branch in the early 1990s, not long after the late Frank Woffenden, who pre-deceased him last November, and was a familiar figure on branch events. Hughie (as he was always known) had a droll sense of humour and it was always amusing to hear him recount anecdotes of his days as a miner. He was a straightforward soul – he either liked you or didn't! The funeral was attended by a contingent from West Riding branch as well as a good number of his old friends. Hughie will be a hard act to follow.

*Andy W*

## **ROY CHEESEMAN**

We were sad to learn of Roy's death earlier this year at the age of 77. Although based in Coventry, Roy was a regular attendee at SPBW events in London (he also contributed an article to PiH 100). Roy was also very active in Camra, including the North Hertfordshire branch, also outside his patch as it were. This involvement partly stemmed from his work with the Cat Survival Trust for whom he worked as a volunteer at their Welwyn headquarters. Roy continued to be an active and enthusiastic beer drinker until the years finally caught up with him.

*Thanks to North Hertfordshire Camra's Pints of View magazine.*

## ***FROM THE ARCHIVES***

The November 1997 issue of PiH had a strong Harveys brewery flavour: a centre spread history of this redoubtable establishment and the Royal Oak in Southwark – then just a few months into its existence as Harveys only London pub – featured on the front cover and on the Perfect Pub Page.

Meanwhile Andy Whitley was making a rare foray to East Anglia, visiting Southwold and Boston and enjoying the delights of the locally brewed ales. I'm not sure how much Andy paid for his beer, but elsewhere in the issue there is reference to a Camra survey which found that the average price of a pint of bitter was £1.64 – affluent Londoners happily paying £1.79. Don't worry, it won't be long before the 3 quid pint is commonplace.

The Branch section reports the first gathering of a US branch, 31 beer lovers gathering at the Wharf Rat brewpub in Baltimore. Of course this is now the Chesapeake Bay chapter, very much the largest SPBW branch.

Twenty years ago the inaugural meeting of a rather shorter lived branch – based in Worthing – was reported by means of a cutting from the Worthing Guardian including a photo in which I look disturbingly cherubic. The meeting, also attended by Ossie Tillett, was held in the Selden Arms, which I note is listed in the 2008 Good Beer Guide.

The same issue also featured the first half Ossie's history of the ancient art of coopering. Another former NEC Chairman, Richard Graham, contributed a review of a book about Brewery Railways which, he wrote "combines one or more of one's interests".

## ***THE PERFECT PUB PAGE***

To me the perfect pub is somewhere you can enjoy a well kept real ale, engage in banter with the other clientele without being assaulted by a barrage of noise from a juke box or sit at a table and read the newspaper and not be faced with people at the next table slurping French onion soup with wholemeal croutons. Let's be honest, a pub that serves food is nothing more than a licensed restaurant.

I ask you to join me in Horsforth, West Yorkshire which, to those of who haven't made it beyond Watford Gap, is a sprawling suburb of Leeds which lies directly beneath the final approach into the nearby Leeds/Bradford Airport. The **Queens Arms** is situated on Long Row, set just far enough back from the roadside to afford room for four traditional bench tables. Built c1630 as a house and weaver's shop, it was bought in 1766 by weaver John Longfellow who obtained a license in 1781 and named it the Horse & Jockey. A brew house was added later, and the pub was renamed it the Queens Arms in 1861. Over the years the pub has been ownership by the likes of Timothy Taylor, the delightfully named Ilkley Brewery and Aerated Water Company, Hammonds Bradford Brewery, Bass Charrington and finally Mitchell & Butler.

Upon entry a choice of two rooms awaits, the left hand doorway leading to a stone flagged traditional bar where you are apt to find locals engaged in cheery banter and others playing dominos. The lounge with its low beamed ceiling is cosy and welcoming and despite the recent addition of an MP3 jukebox, the volume is such that normal conversation is easily achievable. Four regular ales used to be available – Greene King IPA and Abbot, Taylor's Landlord and Stones bitter, all in excellent condition and very popular. All in all, a wonderful old fashioned hostelry which, not unsurprisingly, attracts the discerning drinkers of Horsforth and beyond. Alas however, my drinking idyll came under threat in June when the Queens Arms was bought by Trust Inns, a S & N-backed pub group, and closed for 2 weeks.

Outwardly the building now looks unchanged except for a fresh coat of white paint, the gold coloured lettering on the wall now being black but, inexplicably, the centuries-old Yorkshire flagstones had been replaced by days-old block paving! Upon entering, a brand new carpet was the first noticeable change and an open staircase had appeared leading to the newly sited ladies' loos, the original being converted to accommodate the gentlemen.

The pub now has two handpumped beers – Stones and John Smith's bitters with Landlord to be added as a permanent guest. The back bar is now much brighter with the gents' toilet block having been demolished and the once quaint beer garden is now somewhat larger with a covered area for smokers. On the food front, meals are served Monday to Friday from 12 – 2, so thankfully any future evening sessions will be unspoilt by the gross odours of deep frying and stale vinegar.

Overall my perfect pub hasn't changed a great deal, but in truth there was very little wrong with it in the first place, hence my opening gambit – if it ain't broke, don't fix.

*Graham Davis*

## **BEER BOOKS REVISITED**

*The English Pub* (Collins 1976) and *The World Guide to Beer* (Mitchell Beazley 1977) by Michael Jackson

I'm sure all beer lovers were saddened by the Michael Jackson's death in August. He was arguably the first serious writer on the subject beer and did much to promote the many styles and varieties available throughout the world. These two books have been on my shelves for many years and have proved to be a good basic source of information as well as good reads in their own right.

*The English Pub* was MJ's first book, a liberally illustrated tome that sets out to study "a unique social phenomenon". Its chapters covers subjects such as pub names and signs; beers styles; pub architecture and decoration; games and entertainment: subjects that illustrate the immense fascination of the public house. Inevitably MJ covers the changes in the brewing industry that led to the formation of Camra; he strangely fails to mention SPBW however!

Among many anecdotes recounted I liked the one about the locals of the Railway at Lydd, near Dartford (*sic* – it's the other side of Kent!). The owning brewery suggested that a more appropriate name be found after the local branch line was closed. A competition was organized to establish what should be the new name. The locals refused to stretch their minds on behalf of the brewery; if it couldn't have the Railway, they would call the pub the Station. And they did.

One extraordinary photo is of a group of mature drinkers standing outside the Spring Rock at Upper Barkisland, West Riding of Yorkshire; it was a Webster's pub and they all appear to be drinking either a dark mild or Guinness. They are outside to play at Knur and Spell, a variation of bat-and-trap (as you probably know, the knur is hit with a pommel) which was to be found at the odd ale house in that vicinity. Has anyone ever come across this game?

Michael Jackson concludes: "Because no two pubs are the same (despite the worst efforts of the big brewers), the search [for the perfect pub] can never reach a conclusion. Therein lies its joy."

*The World Guide to Beer* is inevitably a more ambitious work. The bulk of it is a grand tour of the planet, describing beer and drinking styles nation-by-nation. This follows a useful and interesting introduction which explains in simple terms how beer is brewed, the ingredients and the various main beer styles. For the UK there is a map showing all the breweries then extant; many long defunct of course but think how crowded such a map would be now. Likewise the USA section was written before the boom in microbrewing which has transformed the beer scene over there.

Like the other volume covered here, the *World Guide to Beer* is superbly illustrated. The brewing world has moved on apace in the 30 years since it was published but it admirably demonstrates the immense range and styles of this wonderful beverage.

RJ

## ***MEET the BRANCHES***

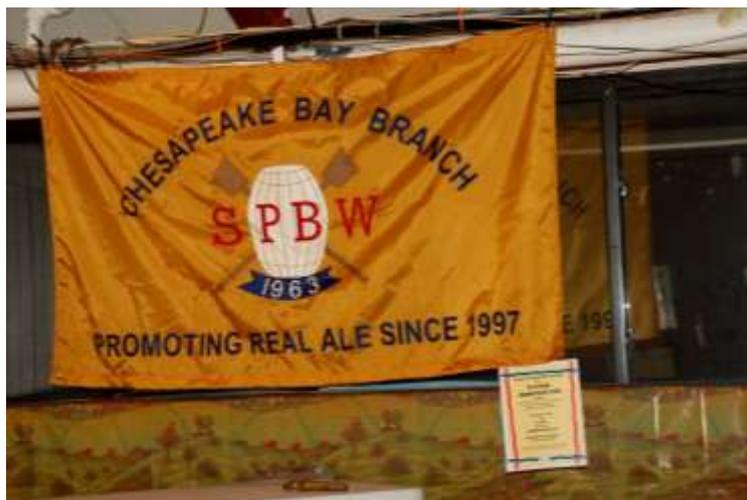
*Most social activities in the Society take place within branches so it makes sense to get involved with one. You're sure to get a good welcome and most branches prefer to keep things very informal. Details of our branches are listed below; if there isn't one in your area you are welcome to start one! Bill English, (Branch Liaison Officer, address on page 2), will be pleased to tell you what you need to know. We will be happy to put you in touch with other local members.*

**BMAD:** Meetings held first Thursday of each month at the **Burnt Mill Snooker and Social Club** (CIU affiliated) in Harlow, Essex. Contact Tony Syrett (01279 423174)

**CAMPDEN HILL:** Meetings held first Monday of each month at the **Wargrave Arms**, Brendon Street (off Edgware Road). Contact John Rooth (see page 2).

**CENTRAL LONDON:** Meetings held on the 18th of each month mostly in the form of pub evaluation walks - usually in central London. Contact Roger West (see page 2).

**CHESAPEAKE BAY:** Based in the area around Baltimore, Maryland USA - a great area for microbrews and brewpubs. Contact Dominic Cantalupo, email [DominicCantalupo@ChampionRealty.com](mailto:DominicCantalupo@ChampionRealty.com). Website: [www.spbw.org](http://www.spbw.org).



**CHESHIRE REAL ALE PEOPLE:** This dubiously-acronymed crew are based mainly around the Crewe/Nantwich area. The emphasis is on the social side with trips planned in the near future. Contact Colin Donald 01270 623376 email [colinsdonald@sky.com](mailto:colinsdonald@sky.com).

**COATE:** Meetings held third Friday of each month at the **New Inn**, Coate, near Devizes. Contact Eric Clark ([ericclark@aol.com](mailto:ericclark@aol.com)) or email [coate@spbw.com](mailto:coate@spbw.com).

**COMMON & ALDBRICKHAM:** Meetings now held in Reading at the *Retreat*, 8 St Johns Street, every Sunday from 3.00. Contact John Dearing 0118 958 0377 or [gpwild@btconnect.com](mailto:gpwild@btconnect.com)

**FÝÇÝ:** A social group formed by ex-pat SPBW stalwarts Peter Willett and Dave Brightwell. Contact Peter for more details: [peterwillettuk@yahoo.com](mailto:peterwillettuk@yahoo.com)

**IPSWICH:** The branch appears to be up and running. Contact Phil (01473 644923) or Iain (01473 253540).

**KINGSTON:** Meetings held first Wednesday of each month in the *Willoughby Arms*, 47 Willoughby Road. Contact Rick at the Willoughby [020 8546 4236]; or our website: [www.spbwingston.co.uk](http://www.spbwingston.co.uk).

**MAYDAY (Hastings):** Based at the *First In Last Out* brewpub, 14-15 High Street. Contact Helen or Tony Champion at the pub on 01424 425079 for further details.

**NORTHERN IRELAND:** Contact Mark Hutchinson for details of meetings and events: [marksalehousecom@hotmail.com](mailto:marksalehousecom@hotmail.com)

**RACS:** The Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth meets last Wednesday of each month at The Gate, London Road. Contact Jan Mead (01279 864398) or email [meadspanner@aol.com](mailto:meadspanner@aol.com).

**SPECIAL:** The branch holds annual, week-long gatherings around the inland waterways network. There are also unofficial visits to pubs of renown in London, Cheshire and Shropshire, or wherever we happen to be. Check our website at: <http://www.geocities.com/canaladmiral/Special.html>

**WANTZ:** Meetings are held third Monday of the month at the *Pembury Tavern*, 90 Amhurst Road, Hackney, starting at around 7.30 pm. Contact Roger Jacobson (see page 2); also check out our website at [www.wantz.co.uk](http://www.wantz.co.uk)

**WEST RIDING:** Meets on Sunday mornings in various pubs in and around Leeds. Contact Graham Hewitt (0113 2624574; [graham-hewitt@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:graham-hewitt@tiscali.co.uk)) for further details.

**WOOLWICH:** Meetings held first Thursday of each month in Greenwich or Woolwich or sometimes in central London. Contact Bill Smith (020 8310 5907).

*Are the details for your branch correct on these pages? If not please the Editor know before the deadline for the next issue; thanks!*

## ***MEN OF STEEL***

### ***Andy's Roving Report***

....Being a tale of derring do in the Yorkshire Dales. In the sunlit days of youth, I (in moments of madness) completed the Three Peaks of Yorkshire challenge walk on a couple of occasions. I was therefore intrigued to be invited to make another attempt on behalf of Cookridge Cancer Hospital, as part of their sponsored walk around the route. Most of my sponsors were generous enough, but Sue withheld funds as it was rumoured, unbeknown to me, that the hospital allows animal testing. Her Guinea Pigs found out and practically rioted: "Monster!" they shouted and shook their tiny fists at me.

Just in case there's anyone who has not heard of the Three Peaks walk, this covers about 25 miles and goes over the mountains of Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough. It is no afternoon stroll as you will read.

The day was drizzly and damp as Schenker and I set off from Horton in Ribblesdale, but we picked up speed and were atop Pen-y-Ghent less than an hour and a quarter later. The walk from here to the foothills of Whernside is long and (to my mind) endless: I was therefore pleased when we finally reached the famous viaduct at Ribbleshead. Not only did this mean a large part of the walk was completed, but also that we could call in for a pint at the **Station Inn**. On my previous visit 20 years ago the pub had sold Scottish & Newcastle beers, but that has all changed.

The Station Inn is bang next to the railway station and the Settle/Carlisle visitor centre. As you enter the pub, you'll see a carpeted dining area to your left, with the bar room to your right. Due to all the muddy boots that tramp in here, the flooring is mostly parquet with a pool table in the middle of the room. The stone faced bar counter had no less than five beers on from the Copper Dragon brewery of Skipton, including their mild, Black Gold. Certain of the brewery's bottled products were available as well.

The Station Inn boasts some of the most scenic views around, with the window in the gents' loo looking out upon a panoramic spectacle of mountains and viaduct. For those who intend to stay in the area, the Inn has B & B accommodation (including 4 poster beds) and its own bunk house. It's a nice pub and the beer was very welcome.

As for the walk, it became an endurance test, with the ascent of Ingleborough being a curse. On the way up we passed a dead shrew by the side of the track; it had obviously taken part in the event but had perished en route. By this time I envied it; Schenker won the Knees of Steel award – mine were like coals of fire and I completed the course with a gait that resembled a blend of Douglas Bader and Max Wall.

### **Guiseley Factory Workers Club**

Guiseley is a small town north west of Leeds and is equidistant between there and Bradford, though happily bearing no resemblance to either conurbation. It possesses quite a number of hostels and one of these is the GFWC on Town Street, less than 10 minutes walk from the train station.

The club is on two levels: you enter through the door into the lounge where you'll see the bar counter to the left, whilst the sunken part at the back of the

building houses the games area. The GFWC differs somewhat from the great majority of clubs in its promotion of cask ales. Next to the Tetley bitter there's handpumps for two ever changing guests from a good variety of breweries. Half a dozen of us turned up one Wednesday and, as a beer from Smiles had just finished, we tried the Goldilocks from Old Bear Brewery. That soon went and two new beers came on – one from Deuchars (that had something to do with sport, I think) and Hop Back's Crop Circle. All the beers were very enjoyable and cost £1.75 a pint, which is pretty much of a bargain these days. Beers from regional companies as large as Bateman's or micros as small as the Three Peaks Brewery seem to make up the bulk of the guest ale list, though the bigger producers don't miss out altogether.

Unusually for a club, the GFWC has won Leeds Camra's Pub of the Year award for 2006/07 and is a worthy winner. Visit as soon as possible and see how clubs ought to be.

### **Fernandes Brewery Tap**

There's been a change of ownership at this rather superior Wakefield hostelry (just off Kirkgate), with it passing into the hands of Ossett Brewery. The pub's founder and owner, Dave James (for it was he) and his good lady Maureen decided on a change of scenery. Thus it was, on the last Sunday in July, that patrons and passers-by gathered from noon onwards for Brer James' leaving do. A book of condolences was passed around for regulars to notarise: it was soon filled with witticisms like "Help!" and "Where's my money?" which goes to show that ingratitude is a thriving art form.

At the appointed hour, the customers arose and sang the theme to the Old Spice advert, whereupon the door opened and Dave himself entered, clad in regal splendour. "Vive l'empereur!" cried the mob, firing muskets in the air. The great man made his way to the podium, doffed his bicorn and spoke: "Mes enfants" he began but his utterances were lost when someone shouted "Drinks on the house!" and the crowd surged to the bar, trampling all before them.

Dave and Maureen are not leaving the trade though as they are relocating to the east coast, where Dave intends to enslave the inhabitants of Filey and make them work in his new brewing project. Originally to be called the Five Leys Brewery, I am informed that it will henceforth be known as the East Coast Brewery.

The pub is in good hands it seems. Fernandes brewery beers still appear along with other guests although the walls seem a bit bare since Dave removed a lot of the awards and plaques. Some changes have occurred: the home brew shop is now next to the 'Red Shed' on Vicarage Street and there is to be a continental bar opened, selling many foreign bottled beers, with its entrance halfway up the stairs to the pub proper. If memory serves, this should open in the month of October, so by the time you receive this issue of PiH you'll have another reason to visit the FBT, won't you?



## **CAMPDEN HILL MEMORIES**

Mention in PiH 103 of the change in Campden Hill's 'branch eater' (surely this important role deserved upper case?) from Mr Hall to Mr English brought back memories. I believe Campden Hill, of which I was once a member, is the oldest surviving branch of the SPBW, and in my mis-spent middle age it was as thirsty a group of toppers as one could hope to find.

The branch boasted several appointments not usually found among a list of officers, such as Branch Clown. At one time it also used to claim to have five Annual Dinners a year, and this must have something to do with the appointment of Branch Eater, and Deputy Branch eater. The latter probably arose because although the Eater, David Hudgell, a man of gargantuan size and appetite might well have out-eaten much of the rest of the branch put together, John Morgan, later chairman of the NEC, was no mean trencherman and this needed recognition.

*Maltworm*

## **REWRITING HISTORY**

My friend and worthy correspondent Andy quite rightly took me to task for a heinous error inadvertently included in his piece on the Saracen's Head, Southwell in the last issue (p14). The year in which this inn adopted its present name was given as 1961 – this is correctly reported in Andy's original manuscript as 1651. I am also grateful to Luke Craig, Manager of the Saracen's Head, for pointing out other historical details not mentioned in the article. The pub's letterhead claims 'established c1460'.

## **SPBW WEBSITE**

The SPBW Members Forum is still going strong at [www.spbw.com/bb](http://www.spbw.com/bb). The Bulletin Board is intended as a way for members to exchange information. It's very easy to get involved with and, as with most things, the more the merrier. We are particularly keen to see representatives of branches acting as moderators to help keep their sections up to date.

## **EMAIL ADDRESSES**

If you want to receive up to the minute news about SPBW events, you can get this information in the comfort of your own PC monitor. Send your email address to John Rooth and he will add you to his circulation list. We promise that your email details will only be used for the transmission of SPBW material.

Some back issues of *Pint in Hand* are available:- numbers 43; 44; 46-51; 53-54; 60-62; 70- 71; 74; 76; 79; 84-103. These can be obtained from the Editor (address on page 2) in return for fifteen second class stamps to cover postage for the full set. If you don't want the whole lot, send enough stamps you think may cover costs.

## ***THE BBC TOUR***

In September I travelled to the US with two of my grown up sons and Colin Donald from CRAP Branch of SPBW. We flew into Philadelphia, and our first bar was **Bridget Foys** on South Street. It had an excellent selection of beers but as our body clocks were on UK time, we decided to stay there the whole evening. Lunch time found us in the **Artful Dodger** on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and our evening session was in the **Nodding Head**, Sansom Street, a particular favourite of mine, with a very good choice of beers and good food. The following day we drove via Valley Forge to Lancaster in Pennsylvania. The Americans do their National Historical Parks well and we enjoyed a pleasant few hours discovering about how Washington and his troops recovered there in the winter of 1777. The reason we made a detour to Lancaster was, on my last trip along with other SPBW members we voted the **Lancaster Brewery Tap aka Walnut St Grill** as the best bar with the best beers. This time however, other than the pleasant Milk Stout, their beers tasted rather ordinary and too gassy. However, that did not stop us sampling their extensive range. On Sunday we drove to New York City, or to be more accurate we drove to the New Jersey side of the Holland Tunnel and stayed in a traffic jam for two hours. Over three days we visited the following bars. **Stout, Heartland Brewery, Chelsea Brewing, Ginger Man and House of Brews**. All had a good choice of beers but the one that stood out for me was the Chelsea Brewing Company, on Pier 59. Being a hot day when we visited it, the outstanding views over the East River and the New Jersey skyline really complemented their tasty beers.

Our next stop was Atlantic City; I can report that the Boardwalk is in excellent condition, other than that I wouldn't recommend visiting the place. Our drinking refuge that night was **Tun Tavern** which had an agreeable selection of beers that hit the spot, to the extent that three of us got lost on the way back to our hotel! An added bonus was the Tun Tavern is situated near two factory outlets for Rebook and Nike shoes. With the dollar at two to the pound, the next morning we found the boot of our car filled with my sons' new shoes and trainers at around £10 a pair. A 75 minute boat trip took us over to Delaware on the ferry MV New Jersey. As we had visited the Statue of Liberty on the Miss New Jersey and toured the battleship USS New Jersey when we were in Philadelphia, we were beginning to think all boats in the US were called New Jersey. The next port of call was Rehoboth Beach, a very congenial seaside town. After a look around and a paddle in the surf, we were off to the **Dogfish Head Brewpub**. It was Colin's favourite of the trip. The only problem was that most of the ale was a bit strong, with a lot in the range 7.5% to 9 %. They even had one at 12%. Next we drove to Washington and besides doing the sights, we did a double visit to **Capitol City Brewing**. An excellent selection of beers but our second visit after seeing another Baseball match was marred, as my elder son didn't have his ID with him and was refused beer. He was slightly comforted by the fact that a couple that looked in their early 30s were refused also.

The next day was the big one, out on the Metro to the end of the line and then a half-hour bus trip to the Goddard Space Center, where we were guests of

the Chesapeake Bay Branch. They were holding a Crabfeast, along with the Space Centre's Homebrew Club. Our host Dominic Cantalupo and his friends made us very, very welcome. What a sight met our eyes when we entered the recreational rooms: set up on the bar were seven firkins of various types of beer from a Vanilla Porter to a Belgian Session beer (always a winner with me). If things could get any better, they did when an eighth firkin was set up, Alan Hew's tribute to Michael Jackson, a Special ESB. In addition, in another room there were the homebrews, and I use this word lightly, as in the States because of the lack of availability of good beer and the distances involved, homebrew is a necessity but quite unlike what homebrew is like in the UK. I fondly remember tasting the late Ron Kodlick's excellent homebrew on my last visit to Baltimore four years previously. Again the styles of homebrew at the Crabfeast were very varied, though most were quite strong in alcohol. Now that I have described the lubrication I will move on to the food. I understand that 28 bushels of crabs were distributed, with 2-3 dozen crabs in a bushel, that is a lot of crabs for 180 people. The crabs in question were of the Chesapeake Bay Blue male variety (the females don't taste as good evidently). Besides the crabs there was an excellent selection of meats and salads to complement the beer. I am pleased to report that the Lancaster Brewery's Red Rose, an amber ale was up to the high standards we are normally used to.



*(l – r) Les, John, Dominic and Colin wait for another barrel to be tapped*  
All too quickly it seemed we had to vacate the rooms for Security to close up. With beer still left Alan Hew and his good lady invited a select few to his home for an impromptu drink. Barrels were either decanted or moved and off we set. We then spent a very convivial 3 hours drinking the beer in his garden and being devoured by mosquitoes.

The next day we were a little fragile, so after a long lay-in we set off for the short drive to Baltimore. Whilst my lads went for a walk, Colin opted for more recovery time in bed. Having had a few pints of their best bitter at the Crabfeast, I went around the corner of our hotel to **Oliver's at the Wharf Rat**. There I spent a very pleasant afternoon outside in the warm sunshine reading a book and sampling two of their three hand pumped beers, though sadly their recommended ESB was off. In the evening we ate at the Capitol City with a wonderful view overlooking the harbour (now closed). Their beers were good but the previous day's excesses had taken its toll and we opted for a couple of beers and an early night.

The following day we took advantage of the Baltimore Harbour Taxi boat service, where for \$8 (£4) you can hop on and off the plentiful taxis boats around the Baltimore area from 9am to 8pm (later in the summer). Given that part of the deal is a huge wad of discount vouchers for food, bar drinks and museum entry etc, we were quids in by the end of the day, especially as two of the bars we had planned to visit were on the discount list. The best place to drink is around Fells Point, where there are some exceptional bars. We visited **Max's on Broadway** (lunch and evening), the wonderfully named and themed **Ale Mary** and **One Eyed Mike's**, home to the Grand Marnier Club with its 780 odd bottles of the stuff in cabinets round the bar. See their website for more details and explanation: <http://www.oneeyedmikes.com>. The previous year Colin had visited the **Du Claw**, a brewpub which he enjoyed. Unfortunately our visit increased the clientele by about 200% so it lacked atmosphere, though there was no problem with the beer.

The next day we returned to Philadelphia and besides visiting the bars I mentioned earlier we went to **O'Neal's** which was round the corner from **Bridget Foys and** had been recommended to us. We weren't disappointed with the beer. I was most impressed with the handpump. It had another handpump fixed on top of it, whether it was to make the beer pulling easier or to match the height of the other pumps, the barmaid couldn't say. The next morning we did some more sightseeing and then headed to airport early so we could dump the car and have a drink. For unbeknown to many travellers, if you go to Terminal B, which is an Internal Flights Terminal there is a Brewpub outlet, which had on draught a wide variety of most of the beers we had been drinking for the past fortnight. What a great way to finish our trip. If you are wondering what the BBC tour title of this article stands for, it's Beer, Baseball and Crabfeast.

*John O'Connor*



## ***BRANCHES IN ACTION***

**Campden Hill** had a joint social with Central branch around Tufnell Park and Camden Town on a wet night in August. Pubs visited included the Dartmouth Arms, the Lord Palmerston 33 Dartmouth Park Hill, a gastro pub, but with good quality Twickenham Original. The Junction Tavern in Fortress Road advertised a beer festival of 50 beers but we had to make do with Red Squirrel Conservation (excellent) and Landlord. The Pineapple in Leverton Street has seen better days, but the Thai food was reasonable and the London Pride quite good.

In October we did a City crawl beginning at the Blackfriars, an art Nouveau pub with opulent décor, then moving round the corner to the Cockpit, a small single roomed pub, with Courage Best, Adnams and Pedigree. The latter seems to be improving nowadays, but is still mediocre compared with what it used to be like. Then on to two more M & B pubs. First Ye Olde Watling, which has an inscription on a wooden beam saying that the SPBW used to meet here. This also sold Tim Taylors Landlord & Harveys Best and was still very busy at 10.00. Nearby Williamsons Tavern was similar in most respects to the Watling, favouring dim lighting and Landlord again.

**Chesapeake Bay** Branch recently held our annual crab feast and what a fantastic time it was. We were blessed to be joined by four of our brethren from the UK, who were as totally immersed into the spicy crustaceans as they were with the eight firkins on hand. The firkins were diverse with a true Best Bitter, a Brown, a Belgian Session beer, dry hopped with Kent Goldings, a hoppy IPA, an Amber Ale, a dry hopped Pale Ale, a Vanilla Porter and a special ESB, Michael Jackson tribute. Around 180 people feasted on 20 bushels of crabs, burgers, chicken, pulled pork and salads. Most of the beer was consumed at our host building at NASA, but we were able to take several firkins with us to a private party afterwards and consume the rest. The event this year was held along with several homebrew clubs, so we ended up with an additional large sampling of superb beer. Our eagerly anticipated 4th Annual Chesapeake Real Ale Festival took place on 27 October, with nearly 30 firkins and 400 people. We even have two Moorhouses and a 2-year old George Gales Prize Old Ale.

**Common and Aldbrickham** branch has just completed its fourth season of vintage bus trips. These were inaugurated by the late Peter Smith along with local member, Peter Bowyer and a friend from Basingstoke who collects vintage buses. It was fitting therefore that the first trip followed a route already chosen by Peter, taking in two classic pubs, the Black Horse at Checkendon and the Bell at Aldworth. At the former we joined in drinking a toast to Pete's memory. The Black Horse was also the scene of our only mechanical breakdown 2 or 3 years back but happily this was not repeated. For the rest of the programme we have covered new ground, including trips into Buckinghamshire to Stokenchurch and Hedgerley, as well as revisiting old favourites such as the Plough at Little London. We welcome members of CAMRA and others from the drinking community on the trips and the "fares" go to a good cause, restoring vintage buses. Any SPBW members who feel like joining us would be welcome; we aim to get back to Reading station by

around 10.30, in time for a final “wet” and the train home. Contact John Dearing on 0118 9580377 or email [gpwild@btconnect.com](mailto:gpwild@btconnect.com), if you would like to be put on the circulation list for next year’s programme which will probably begin in April.

Peter Smith left a large collection of beer glasses mostly from beer festivals. If anybody would like to give them a home also contact John Dearing who can pass on any interest to Pete’s brother, Richard.

**RACS** won their long awaited pub games contest against Camra in early August, this being held at the Queen’s Head at Allens Green. This pub held a beer festival over August bank holiday as, of course, did the Gate, where once again the RACS tombola stall was a prominent feature. RACS also descended on the GBBF that month. The Christmas Quiz is on Sunday 9 December at 19.30.

**Wantz** had two events in September: first a tour of select Fleet Street pubs, then a day trip to Lewes and Brighton. For the latter we enjoyed good weather and some excellent beers, not least from a certain local independent family brewery. In early November we made a return to Navarro’s, an excellent tapas restaurant in the west end. The meal was pleasantly chaotic as we grappled with numerous plates of tasty dishes washed down with the house red. Our aperitifs were taken round the corner in the One Tun in Goodge Street.

**West Riding** headed east for day trip to Hull in September. The latest Pub of the Season award was given to the Hunter’s Inn at Pool in Wharfedale, often a runner up.

### ***The Last Word ...from Hogwarts via Maryland***

It can only happen in America...Dr Christopher Welsh, an assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland is worried that Harry Potter might drive your kids to drink. Noting that Harry and his pals drink a beverage called ‘butterbeer’, Dr Welsh notes “Despite its relative innocence and benign treatment in the books, it is not clear how many children and adolescents might read this and think that drinking alcohol is funny or, at the very least, an acceptable thing to do when you are an adolescent.” The Doc recommends that parents and teachers use J K Rowling’s best sellers as a springboard for teaching children about underage drinking.

Butterbeer is supposed to have a warming effect and apparently can lower inhibitions to some extent; however it seems to be intoxicating only for creatures such as house elves with a small body mass.

Of course, the more astute among you will be aware that the Harry Potter books are works of pure fiction. Even the youngest and most avid readers will presumably be aware that magicians and elves are nothing but fantasy and are no more likely to go out and get pissed as a Potter than try and fly on a broomstick. Mind you, I’ve no doubt that Dr Welsh was well rewarded for his diligent research.

Thanks to *Mid-Atlantic Brewing News* (‘charting your passage to the New World of craft brewing’) for the story.

## **SPBW PRODUCTS**

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tankards**

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*The Railway View, Macclesfield*