

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

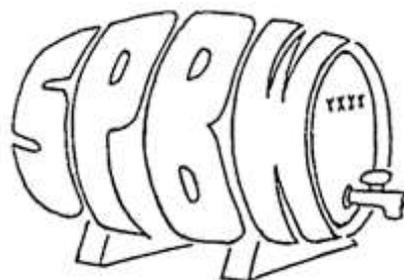
***PINT in HAND***

*Number 107*

*August 2008*



*Kings Head, Norwich*  
*An abundance of local ales (see page 9)*



## ***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 November 2008 issue should reach the Editor by **25 October**.
- The Editor or the National Executive Committee of SPBW does not necessarily share opinions expressed in *Pint in Hand*.

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*All photos by Roger Jacobson unless stated otherwise*

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Editorial address

**Roger Jacobson**

email [editor@spbw.com](mailto:editor@spbw.com)

Membership Secretary

**Roger West**, Four Winds, 70 Chalfont Road, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 2QP; email [membership@spbw.com](mailto:membership@spbw.com)

Branch Liaison

**Bill English**, email [beeel@myway.com](mailto:beeel@myway.com)

Products

**Dave Samuel**, email [spbw.products@btinternet.com](mailto:spbw.products@btinternet.com)

General Secretary

**John Rooth**

email [john.rooth@gfk.com](mailto:john.rooth@gfk.com)

National Chairman

**Chris Callow**

email [chris@callow.com](mailto:chris@callow.com)

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Website: <http://www.spbw.com>.

On-line forum: <http://www.spbw.com/bb>

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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***

A front page story in today (28 July)'s *Guardian* – more of which later – led me to the web site of the British Beer & Pub Association. The BBPA (whose members account for 98% of beer brewed in Britain and over half its pubs) has just launched the UK Quarterly Beer Barometer containing the most comprehensive set of data on beer trends in Britain. This claims that beer sales are down 4.5 per cent in April to June this year, compared with the same quarter last year. In total, 107 million fewer pints were sold compared with the same quarter in 2007 – a fall of 1.2 million pints a day. Beer sales in pubs, bars and restaurants are down 10.6 per cent over the same period. The on-trade sold 144 million fewer pints during April to June this year compared with the same quarter in 2007 – down 1.6 million pints a day. The BBPA thus estimates that the Treasury has collected *£88 million less* in beer duty and VAT than in the same period last year, despite the recent duty hike. Good planning, Mr Darling & co!

The BBPA has hit the headlines because it has withdrawn its code on drinks promotions – it effectively banned promotions that encourage or reward drinking large quantities of booze in single sessions, or deals that encourage drinking quickly. The move has been taken on legal advice from Government since the code may be found to breach some area of European law. As a result, clubs and bars have already begun to slash prices to bring in customers bent on oblivion and brain damage. Now I doubt if the types of establishment which will take advantage of the relaxed rules are ever likely to be graced by the presence of discerning SPBW members. But it does indicate how screwed up Government's policies on the alleged UK drink problem are. If licensed premises can offer cheap drink to rival that on the supermarket shelves what is the point of driving up beer duty – especially now that stats show this hasn't worked. Maybe while Gordon Brown is on holiday in Southwold he might pop into the Lord Nelson, Sole Bay Inn and other local pubs to see the benefits of drinking locally brewed ale in a comfortable and controlled environment.

Another recent story from the same newspaper concerns a study by French scientists that suggests that when the volume of music in a pub goes up, customers drink faster and consume more. I'm not sure whether this study was carried out as an aid to struggling publicans or for the benefit of the anti-alcohol lobby, but I can say with no hesitation that when the music gets louder I certainly drink quicker – so that I can finish and get to a decent pub where the customer is treated with respect.

Enough of this rant; let me remind you that I am always on the look out for contributions, long and small. Accompanying pictures in jpeg form are especially welcome. Enjoy a summer of sensible drinking!

*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.

## ***NATIONAL WEEKEND 2008***

If you've recovered from last year's event, or are regretting not taking part – now you start planning for the 2008 gathering of the SPBW clans. This year we are heading for **Ipswich** on the weekend **7 – 9 November**. We have arranged visits to 2 of Suffolk's smaller breweries:

Friday at 7.30 pm: **St Jude's** – established in late 2006 and now the only brewery in Ipswich.

Saturday at 11.45: **Old Cannon** in Bury St Edmunds. Not quite on the same scale as another outfit up the road, in an earlier incarnation it was a brewpub from 1845 to 1917; brewing started again in 1999.

The brewery tours cost £12 and £9 respectively and include beer and food.

Members of our Ipswich branch will look after us and there are bound to be visits to key local pubs such as the Fat Cat and Dove Street Inn. To cover the cost of the two brewery visits, John Rooth will be collecting £21 deposits. Please send him a cheque (made out to SPBW). If we go ahead with coach hire there will of course be more to pay at the weekend. John can also supply details of local accommodation.

## ***MEETING THE PUBLIC*** ***Getting the Ealing Feeling***

This year the Ealing Beer Festival moved to a new venue, the third in as many years, the scenic Walpole Park, in the town centre, and home of Pitshanger Manor (1770), once owned by the noted architect Sir John Soane.

The festival had over 150 beers, plus cider and bottled UK and foreign beers. The weather was quite good for the whole duration, apart from a few showers, so the attendances were very high (around 5,000 for the first 3 days).

The ambience and the climate, which enabled imbibers to sit out on the grass most of the time, meant that a lot of beer was consumed. Despite an emergency order from Twickenham and Rebellion, this meant that all of the cask beer and cider had run out completely by 5 o'clock on the Saturday. Demand was so high that extra glasses were also required.

The Polish food was excellent, with substantial portions of hunter's stew, hog roast and traditional Polish sausages being amongst the favourites. The South African biltong and steak bar, was also very good, but struggled to compete.

Amongst the beers were a lot of milds, which was good to see. The organisers (West Middlesex Camra), were pleased that their new venue had been so successful, but wished they had ordered more beer. This of course is always a difficult balance, because if the weather had been poor, then attendances would have been much lower, and individual Camra branches are forced to err on the conservative side of ordering to avoid large losses from left over beer.

Sales on the SPBW stall went well, and the new lines, Rugby shirts, polos with pockets, key rings and bottle openers were very well received. It was good to see lots of old friends again, and thank you to Graham, Brian, John, Roy, Maurice, Brian, Dave and co, of West Middlesex Camra.

An excellent festival, with probably their best and most ambitious beer list so far, and a very good basis hopefully for future years in Walpole Park.

If the weather is good, an outdoor-tented venue such as this is much better than the cramped, stuffy council hall venues, which are often requisitioned for summer beer festivals.

Our next public appearances will be at Wallington beer festival (Wallington Hall, Stafford Road, Wallington; 9 – 11 October); and at Pig's Ear in Hackney in early December.

*John Rooth*

## **LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR**

Thanks to all branches and individuals who have nominated pubs: here are the pubs to be judged:

Bree Louise, Euston  
Bricklayers Arms, Putney  
Calthorpe Arms, Bloomsbury  
Dog & Bell, Deptford  
Duke of Hamilton, Hampstead  
Old Mitre, Holborn  
Palm Tree, Mile End  
Pembury Tavern, Hackney  
Royal Oak, Borough  
Speaker, Westminster  
Star Tavern, Belgravia  
Sultan, South Wimbledon  
Trafalgar, South Wimbledon  
Wenlock Arms, Hoxton  
Willoughby Arms, Kingston

A few changes from last year and a worthy selection of pubs from various corners of the capital. Judging sessions will take place between now and the end of October; the winning pub and details of the presentation will be in the November issue. In the meantime check out our website to see how the judges are getting on. Thanks to Bill English for organising.

## ***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:** 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 usually held in Reading; contact John Dearing 0118 958 0377 or [gpwild@btconnect.com](mailto:gpwild@btconnect.com) to find out where and when.

**CROYDON REAL ALE PRESERVATION SOCIETY:** Meet on the first Tuesday of each month in The Green Dragon, High Street Croydon CR0 1NA, and also every subsequent Tuesday at a pub somewhere in, or easily reachable by public transport from, Croydon. (These additional venues change weekly, and are intimated by email during the previous couple of days if you have supplied your email address to John Smith.) Contact Pete McGill 07831 561296 (m) or John Smith 02071884844 (w).

**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:** Contact Phil (01473 644923) or Iain (01473 253540) for details of meetings.

**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.spbwkingston.co.uk](http://www.spbwkingston.co.uk).

**MAYDAY (Hastings):** We're not sure if this branch is still operating. It is/was 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) or the website [www.racs.org](http://www.racs.org).

**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 at 8.30 pm at the Prince Albert (Rose's), Hare Street, Woolwich. Usually four handpumped guest beers are available. 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!*

<p>Some back issues of <b>Pint in Hand</b> are available:- numbers 46-49; 51; 53; 71; 84-106. These can be obtained from the Editor (address on page 2) in return for twenty 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.</p>
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## **CATS AND CANARIES**

### **A STROLL AROUND NORWICH**

Those of us of a certain age – that is, who can recall the beer scene of more than 30 years ago – may remember that Norfolk was, more than most counties, firmly in the grip of the major breweries. Our old friends Watney and Whitbread had closed down the likes of Bullard, Lacon and Steward & Patteson, leaving customers to enjoy the delights of Norwich Bitter, Tankard and not a lot else. Luckily that all soon changed and now Norwich can boast a plethora of pubs offering a wide choice of beers and is right up there with the likes of Derby and Sheffield as an attraction for the lover of good ale and pubs.

The city itself – which was once second in size in England only to London – has plenty of its own attractions. The wealth generated by the wool trade throughout the Middle Ages financed the construction of many fine churches and Norwich still apparently has more medieval churches than any other city in Western Europe north of the Alps; the centrally located cathedral dates from the 12th century. Its market place, established by the Normans between 1071 and 1074, is today the largest six-days-a-week open-air market in England. As a quiet retreat from the bustling city centre you can enjoy a stroll by the River Wensum, which flows into the Norfolk Broads.

But as we're here for the beer, a good place to start for the rail traveller is the Coach & Horses on Thorpe Road (right and right again out of the station). This 19th century former coaching inn has an unusual façade which might not looked out of place on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Inside it's all a bit more traditional, consisting of one L-shaped bar leading to a conservatory area at the back. The pub is the home of the Chalk Hill Brewery and their entire range can be sampled here. I can't claim to have gone through the card but I've not been disappointed by those I have tried.



Chalk Hill beers can also be sampled at the Alexandra Tavern (opposite) way across on the west end of town, south off the Dereham Road. This is a homely and friendly two room pub with lots of unusual memorabilia on display inside and a strange kind of covered sofa on the pavement outside (along with a couple of wooden casks now seemingly used as tables). Chalk Hill Tap (3.8%) cost £2 a pint here and there were also two guest ales, from Everard and Titanic. Across Dereham Road and up Nelson Street we find the multi-award winning Fat Cat. Let me start by saying that this is a very pleasant place to visit, being a traditional street corner pub with lots of memorabilia of old Norfolk breweries and pubs, and good friendly service; 27 beers are offered, many of these direct from the cask. My gripe is that on both my visits to date, only 4 out of all these beers were less than 4%, quite a few were fairly routine, widely available brands and, other than their own micro plant, Norfolk beers are very poorly represented. Am I being churlish or over-fussy?

On the south side of town I can recommend the Kings Arms on Hall Road. This is owned by Batemans but, like the wonderful Palmerston Arms in Peterborough, also offers quite a range of guest beers. It's very much a community pub, popular with Norwich City fans (Carrow Road is not far away) as well as locals.

Moving across to the north of the city, try the Duke of Wellington, Waterloo Road (below). This wedge-shaped pub is also very much a locals' place and also offers beer on gravity as well as by handpump – more than a dozen in all as I recall. I certainly enjoyed a pint of Elgood Black Dog mild here but again, there seemed to be little in the way of Norfolk ales. An oval Bullard mirror caught my eye and there is an extensive collection of beer bottles on shelves around the pub, which extends quite a way back from the front bar.



Now head back towards the centre of Norwich and in Magdalen Street is the last pub on this small tour, but the best in my humble opinion: the Kings Head. The front door takes you into a small plain room but you can walk through into a much larger bar, complete with bar billiards. Décor here includes some maps of the city dating from the 1830s showing a remarkable profusion of

pubs – mostly now all gone. Of even more interest is the beer list – a dozen or so on offer and almost all from small Norfolk breweries such as Spectrum, Winter and Humpty Dumpty. Even the ‘imported’ ales were from across the border (Suffolk and Lincolnshire); I’ve banged on enough in these pages about the merits of pubs serving local ales and the Kings Head gets it absolutely right on this score. If East Anglian draught beers don’t do it for you, there is a range of bottled German and Belgian brands, plus Hue beer from Vietnam. The guvnor here is a very pleasant and knowledgeable bloke and he deserves your custom.

This selection of pubs is only a sample of all that Norwich has to offer (the 2008 GBG lists 14 in all) but I hope it whets your appetite. If you’re travelling from London you can get a return for as little as £12.

*RJ*

### ***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.

### ***THE WATERMILL AT INGS***

We were very sad to read in PiH 106 of the death of Alan Coulthwaite of The Watermill at Ings. We only managed to visit once, in November 1997, but what a time to remember and we wrote a report for RACS Quarterly Winter 1998 and an abridged version was published in PiH 65 February 1998 page 9. How good to hear the family are carrying on the business, we shall get back there one day ...

*Nicholas and Caroline Macy (RACS)*

I had the pleasure of a return visit to the Watermill in July and can report that the pub is every bit as good as ever and should be sought out by all discerning beer lovers.

*RJ*

## ***FROM THE ARCHIVES***

The August 1998 issue featured the Morrells Brewery logo on the cover and the advice to 'enjoy it while you can'. The impending closure of the long-established Oxford brewery was not due to a hostile takeover; rather, the shareholders decided to sell and thereby send over 200 years of tradition and successful business down the pan. The company continued to run its 132 pub chain until 2002 when a company from Bury St Edmunds bought it. Wantz branch had recently visited Oxford for a last taste of Morrells beers, and others.

10 years earlier the cover of PiH featured images of Adnams Sole Bay Brewery, happily still in operation and thriving. This was by illustration of another Wantz outing, this time to Southwold for a visit to the brewery. This began at the unearthly hour of 10 am on a Saturday (and I suspect drink had been taken the night before). I do recall almost being locked in the brewery after the tour and sampling, but escaped to visit some of the town's pubs.

There was a brief mention that we had run a stand at the GBBF, held that year in Leeds. I believe that an encounter here with a few local drinkers led to the formation of the current West Riding branch, and to Andy Whitley's series of articles; so, a very worthy venture by our volunteers.

Back a further decade and the August 1978 issue of the SPBW 'Quarterly Bulletin'. This was edited by Roy Iliffe, who I believe was part of the short-lived Firkin branch, as part of his role as National Membership Secretary (he was also looking after some of our products - multi-tasking must have been in vogue back then!) There was a preview of the GBBF at Alexandra Palace at which SPBW would be running a stand for the first time. Some 140 beers would be on offer (about 450 are promised for the 2008 event).

There was a useful overview of the then current branches including the likes of Peripatetic (based in Stoke on Trent), De Montfort (Leicester), Salopia, plus two in Wiltshire: Poulshot and Wingfield; and the aforementioned Firkin, who met at the Albert Arms in Esher; all these long defunct.

A section on 'brewery news' revealed that Fullers were gradually converting their pubs to proper draught beer. Elsewhere in London, Watneys were removing brewery signs from their pubs and repainting them to resemble Youngs houses. Despite this *faux pas*, all nine of the former fizz bastion's breweries were producing some kind of real ale. Elsewhere, Ruddles (then still a proud independent company with a working brewery) had sold all but one of their 38 tied houses, while Shipstones of Nottingham had been taken over by Greenall Whitley. Surprisingly, perhaps, the brewery continued in operation until 1991 but, like its neighbours Home and Hardy & Hanson (taken over and dumped by Scottish & Newcastle and a Suffolk brewery respectively) is now no more than a memory for Nottingham drinkers.



# **SADDLEWORTH SOIREE**

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

This is a bit of the Pennines that most folk will only see from their car as they travel between Holmfirth and Oldham. Much of the scenery can look bleak indeed in winter, consisting as it does of peat bogs and exceedingly soggy moor land. However, in the middle of June this year, your humble scribe and 2 companions managed to pick a warm day to do a circular walk (of approximately 17 miles) from the small town of Greenfield whilst visiting a few pubs en route.

Our perambulations commenced at Dovestone reservoir, led us up Rimmon Pit Clough (a rather steep and rocky gully) and onto the A635 road, which we crossed and headed north-west along the stone flagged path that crossed Featherbed Moss. Reaching the A62, we turned left alongside it for a short while and turned left again at a public footpath sign for Diggle. This turned out to be part of the Pennine Way bridle path: after about 20 minutes walk we reached the first halt of the day at the ***Diggle Hotel***, which I think is in the hamlet of Diglea though I don't insist upon it. The village of Diggle is really made up of three hamlets – Diglea, Harrop Green and Weakey – and I think the hotel is in Harrop Green. Originally built as a merchant's house in the late 1700s before becoming an inn during the years of the great railway expansion about 60 years later, this is one solid block of stone that could probably survive anything short of an atomic explosion. The old platform on the (long closed) station is very close by.

There were 5 beers available during our visit: the 3 regulars are Black Sheep bitter, Taylor's Landlord and Copper Dragon Black Gold, with 2 guests – Daleside bitter and Bolton Flat Cap. Between us we chose the Black Gold and Daleside bitter – both were in good condition. The Diggle Hotel is obviously geared up towards food, but there is no quibbling about serving walkers or folk just calling in for a drink. Apart from the well carpeted and upholstered main room, I noticed a smaller dining room off to the left of the entrance. I believe that the Hotel still hosts a beer festival on occasion and that brass band (Saddleworth was always famous for its bands) plays on alternative Sabbath afternoons in summer.

As you will have gathered by now, the Diggle Hotel is well worth the visit though it doesn't do accommodation at the moment of writing due to a necessary minor alteration. There's plenty in the area though for those intending to stop over. The address is the Diggle Hotel, Station Houses, Diggle, Saddleworth, near Oldham OL3 5JZ, telephone 01457 872741.

From the Diggle Hotel we continued to follow the Pennine Way Bridlepath markers for a mile or so, before leaving the way when it descended into the valley. We then followed another lane leading slightly higher up the hillside and eventually connected with Church Road in the middle of Uppermill, the capital of Saddleworth. It is a long trudge up this distinctly steep hill, but it is worth it as the ***Cross Keys*** is at the top, just past the parish churchyard. This is a superb 18<sup>th</sup> century hostelry, set on the very edge of Saddleworth Moor and although I have written about this pub previously (PiH 57) it deserves an

encore. As we had been slogging along under an increasingly laser-like sun (an amazingly dry day for the area) we were glad to enter the cool interior of the inn. There are three rooms here, along with one of the most traditional looking tap rooms imaginable which is known as 'Buckley's Kitchen', with stone flagged floor and a Yorkshire range. The Cross Keys is owned by John Willie Lees brewery and there were 5 of their offerings available on our visit – Spring Cheer, Brewer's Dark, John Willie's Premium, Scorcher and Bitter. I went for the Dark, which was formerly known as GB Mild – shame about the name change but the beer is still first class. The duo accompanying me chose different beers which they too considered to be very good.

The pub appears to be a meeting place for a remarkable variety of clubs and suchlike, be they motorcyclists, brass bands, fell runners, fell rescuers, folkies and gawd knows what else. Live music is held in esteem here with bands performing in the nearby barn. The address of the Cross Keys is Running Hill Gate, Uppermill OL3 6LW, telephone 01457 874626.

From here to Greenfield isn't very far – just take Gellfield Lane next to the churchyard and follow your nose. Most of the route from here is downhill and very much so as you go down Haw Clough Lane into Greenfield. By the time we got back I was totally grilled by the sun and was roughly the same hue as a post box.

There's many folk festivals held in the villages of Saddleworth, including the big folk event in July, the Rushcart Procession in August, the beer festival (Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill) on 5/6 September this year and there's even a beer walk for charity around 10 of Saddleworth's pubs. This will be next held on 6 June 2009 and has been a regular event since the early 1970s.

This is an excellent area to visit, with some 1<sup>st</sup> class pubs and scenery. An address which might be of interest to travellers in the region is the Saddleworth Tourist Information Centre, Saddleworth Museum, High Street, Uppermill, Saddleworth, near Oldham OL3 6HS, telephone 01457 870336.

By the way, Saddleworth is in the West Riding of Yorkshire, *not* Lancashire or 'Greater Manchester'!

### **RAFA Club, 56 New Road, Westfield, Yeadon LS19 7NA**

Situated close to the boundary with Guiseley, the RAFA Club occupies a very sizeable detached stone building next to the A65 and on the 33 bus route. Notwithstanding the large exterior, the lounge itself is compact and very comfortable and there is, as one would imagine, a great deal of RAF memorabilia covering the walls. There are plates and prints abounding depicting aircraft of the past. Note the leaded lights (RAF roundels) above the bar counter along with the display of squadron plaques. There's a dartboard at the corner of the counter for archery fans as well. I am not sure how long the club has been here, though I'd say that the building pre-dates the Wright Brothers!

I am delighted to say that the beer, in both quality and price, is excellent: on our first visit in May this year the two handpumps were dispensing Saltaire Brewery Blonde and Naylor's Drayman's Heaven – both at £1.60 a pint. Not a special offer either, just the everyday price irregardless of strength; on our return, in early June, one of the beers was Magpie Brewery's Thieving Rogue which weighs in at 4.5% and was still £1.60, about a quid cheaper than it would have been in most pubs in Leeds city centre.

Intending to visit? The RAFA club opens at 8.00 on an evening and the telephone number is 0113 250 6090.

## ***BRANCHES IN ACTION***

**Campden Hill** visited 2 excellent pubs in the Merton/South Wimbledon area in June. Starting at the Sultan for some excellent Hopback and Downton beers at less than £2.50 a pint, we then adjourned for a meal. Slurps on the Merton Road is a Chinese/Japanese specialist café. Good portions including starters, main and a couple of beers cost about £15 a head. As oriental food digests easily we were then able to go to the Trafalgar, where as usual they had a range of beers available at reasonable prices. At the end of July we did a 4 pub crawl in Sutton. The first 2 pubs, the Lord Nelson and the New Town were Youngs, the latter very quiet on a Monday night, and the beer acceptable in both. Just around the corner is the Fullers pub, the Little Windsor. The Pride was good, and the outside terrace area very pleasant (before the thunderstorm). The last port of call was the Old Bank (former Hogshead), adjacent to the station, where the Bombardier was surprisingly good. We travel to Portsmouth on 16 August and the next branch meal will be on 2 October in the Edgware Road area.

**Common & Aldbrickham** branch is now well into its fifth summer season of vintage bus trips for the drinking community, visiting country pubs in the Reading area otherwise difficult to access. Those visited so far this year include such old favourites as the Bell at Aldworth, the White Horse, Checkendon, the Plough at Little London (very little!) and the White Horse, Hedgerley. However, we have also managed to fit in some new venues, the Royal Standard at Wooburn Common and the Jolly Farmer, Cookham Dean, both in one evening and managing to go round in circles trying to find both. But it's all part of the fun.

On 26 July when we welcomed members of Campden Hill branch to Reading. The combined forces met at Reading station and caught the train to the village of Theale, which boasts no fewer than six pubs or eight if you include those in nearby hamlets. We only managed two, the Crown, selling West Berks Good Old Boy, and the Red Lion, where the Young's bitter was a bit like "Coals to Newcastle" for the visitors. Back in Reading, the lunch was taken at the unique pie shop-cum-pub-cum restaurant, Sweeney and Todd, which some noted as being next to the venue of Pete Smith's somewhat controversial funeral! A circular tour then took in the Nag's Head, Allied Arms and Retreat,

culminating in Hopback Brewery's tied house, the Hop Leaf. Here a presentation of Pub of the Year was made by the host branch. This was in recognition of the hard work put in by the new managers, Dave and Clare Richards, building up a pub that had suffered from frequent changes of management in previous years. Well worth a visit if you're ever in Reading, which also goes for the other pubs we called in.

**CRAPS** enjoyed a visit to Harveys of Lewes; see page 18.

**Ipswich** branch have a Social on 28th August 20:00 at the Dove Street Inn Summer Beer Festival; beer from the wood will be available.

**RACS** played the local CAMRA branch at pub games in the garden of The Queen's Head, Allen's Green on 26 July. Splendid weather, good selection of beers to drink - perhaps that is why RACS lost! Challenge to be renewed next year. This was followed by a coach trip to the White Horse, Ridgewell, Essex on 2 August for their beer festival and the usual visit to the GBBF. Over the August bank holiday weekend we have our Summer Competition (on Sunday 24 August) and our now famous tombola running from Thursday August 21st pm until it has nothing left - maybe Bank Holiday Monday. This of course is at the same time as the Gate beer festival. On 11 September we have an evening visit to the Chappell beer festival in Suffolk.

**Special Branch's** annual canal gathering followed a similar route to last year, around Worcester, Birmingham and the Black Country. Some classic old favourite pubs were revisited such as the Vine, Brierley Hill; Olde Swan, Netherton; and the Royal Exchange, Stourbridge. Two new and recommended discoveries came on the Thursday: the Waggon & Horses, Oldbury and the Anchor, Digbeth. Both are a bit of a walk from the canal but the choice of beers in each, plus the fact that both are excellent pubs, fully justified the diversion. At least half of the branch made its annual trek to the Lake District in early July for some good walking and drinking.

**Wantz** branch had a fun day out in June visiting Brentwood Brewery – see next page. Our one recent pub walk, a few days later, took in just two pubs in the Victoria/Westminster. After one pint in the Sanctuary House (Fullers) we spent the rest of the evening in the Speaker in Great Peter Street, after which we agreed it was worthy of nomination for the London Pub of the Year. We're looking forward to our second overseas venture – we have a weekend visit to Lille in October.

**West Riding** continue to visit beer festivals throughout Yorkshire; there was also a trip to Anglo-Dutch brewery on 17 June.



## ***BEERS FROM BRENTWOOD***

Brentwood Brewery is hidden in about as obscure a location you could imagine – in an anonymous former cowshed at the end of a private road off a country lane – but in two years brewing it's managed to make an impact on the local beer scene with a wide variety of ales.

Back in 2005 the Brewery founders Dave Holmes and Roland Kannor were looking for an interesting way to fill in their spare time. They both enjoyed a drink and, having decided that running a pub was too much like hard work, decided to try their hands at brewing. After a year of research the Brentwood Brewing Company was founded on 4 July 2006 on a 5 barrel capacity plant in Navestock, near Brentwood. After a few months of production of the first beer - Summer Virgin - further fermenters were added to the plant enabling Dave and Roland to brew 3 times per week to meet an ever increasing demand as word spread of a new brewery producing quality local ale. The brewery won the Beer of the Festival award at the Chelmsford Summer Beer Festival 2007 for Summer Virgin: against some 300 other ales this was a huge achievement for such a new enterprise.

Since then, Sophie deRonde has joined the team as Assistant Brewer and Jason Jopson, landlord of the nearby White Horse at Coxtie Green, has come on board as a business partner. The brewing now takes place in a new site a couple of miles from Brentwood with a 3,000 litre capacity, producing a current portfolio of 15 ales. One of these, launched earlier this year, helps to raise funds for Essex FM's 'Essex Kids' Charity fronted by 'Martin & Sue and the Morning Crew' on their weekday breakfast show.



*White Horse, Coxtie Green*

Brentwood Brewery has joined the ranks of the Society of Independent Brewers and have recently signed up to the Direct Delivery Scheme which will allow their ales to be available to pubs belonging to the large pubco groups.

Wantz branch and friends visited the brewery on Midsummer Day and – having eventually located the site! – enjoyed a few pints of Hoop Stock and Barrel (brewed for the Hoop at Stock, the other side of Brentwood) while Dave gave an interesting and informal chat. Dave still works full time for Romford CID, but his and Roland’s hobby is certainly proving a success. You can find out more about the brewery, its range of ales and its outlets from the website <http://www.brentwoodbrewing.co.uk/>, from which much of this article has been unashamedly cribbed! Keep an eye out for Brentwood beers and give them a try; I don’t think you’ll be disappointed.



*Roger presents SPBW certificate to Dave (r)  
(Pic: Bill Stansfield)*

We presented Dave with a handcrafted SPBW framed certificated to commemorate our visit (we all got a Brentwood bar towel in return) and finally dragged ourselves away from the brewery. Next stop was the aforementioned White Horse, where a tasty buffet was waiting, along with a range of 5 or 6 beers, including one of Dave’s. Sadly we were a few weeks too early for the pub’s annual beer festival. This is a fairly typical country pub a couple of miles north west of Brentwood (and public transport is very limited!) with two bars and a large garden. We rounded off the day by visiting a couple of pubs in the town of Brentwood – the GBG listed Rising Sun and the Swan (formerly a Hogshead) - before getting the train and rounding off an enjoyable day with further pints in Liverpool Street or Stratford.

*RJ*



## **C.R.A.P.S. AT HARVEY'S**

Having a mate who can literally 'organize a piss-up in a brewery' has proved fortunate for CRAPS branch recently. Toby mentioned that his pal Peter Yarlett, Harvey's Third Brewer, had offered a tour to interested parties and would we be interested? Well, yes, Toby – we would! Retrieving his half-bitten-off hand, he said he'd be in touch...

And so, about twenty Crappers, friends, spouses and camp followers met at the Brewery in Lewes on 14 June and were led around the handsome Victorian building by Peter who capably explained the brewing process from raw ingredients to finished product. We sampled malted barley, and rubbed hops between our fingers; we marvelled at the massive coppers where wort is boiled; we risked suffocation sniffing the gas above the open fermentation vessels; and we made our way to the sampling room...



*Happy Harvey samplers (pic: Peter McGill)*

Peter took us through a brief guided tasting before letting us loose on the casks. The beer ( Olympia, Armada, Knots of May, as I recall) was in fine fettle as one would expect, and all was well with the world. Then Peter brought out something rather special: the Imperial Extra Double Stout – a marvellously dark rich beer which we were privileged to taste in both bottled and cask versions. As this almost pitch-black beer ends up at about 9 – 10% abv, it was, therefore, to be treated cautiously – with great respect. So we tucked in without a second's hesitation! The bottled version was drier with good conditioning evident, and port overtones coming through the intense fruitiness. The cask version was similar, but with smoother condition and fresher fruit. Both were superb drinks. Some of us had more than one. Or two.



*Harveys Cliffe Wharf Brewery*

Lunch – a sandwich in The Dorset Arms accompanied by a fine pint of Copperwheat - was followed by a visit to The Gardeners Arms where some Gadds Dogbolter and Sharps beers went down well. Some of our party headed for The John Harvey Tavern, and the rest of us headed for Brighton where we had several Dark Star beers in The Evening Star. A quick visit to The Lord Nelson for a pint of Harvey's Sussex Bitter, and then it was time for the train.

Thinks: Must do that again sometime...

*Peter McGill*

## ***The Last Word – from Bruges***

Anyone who's ever been to Bruges will know that it's a very attractive town with plenty of bars where you can sample excellent Belgian beers. Now there is an added attraction on the form of the Fritmuseum at 33 Vlamingstraat. Bruges already boasts museums dedicated to lamps (some 6,500 items) and chocolate so an institution devoted to fried potato chips is an obvious addition. All 3 museums are the brainchild of one Eddy Van Belle, clearly a man of wide interests.

Potatoes apparently were first found in Peru around 15,000 BC and the Fritmuseum explains that Belgian fries were born in the 1700s. Belgians would catch small fresh water fish, fry them and eat them whole; during a severe winter when the rivers froze they cut and fried small fish-shaped potatoes instead. The Frietmuseum is set in one of Bruges's oldest buildings, dating from 1399 and can boast some beautiful photos of purple and pink tubers from Peru and an interesting collection of 'chip art'. You can also marvel at a collection of retro chip fryers and watch a film showing how to cook the perfect Belgian friet. Chips go well with beer, which is where we came in. As a taster, have a look at the website: [frietmuseum.be](http://frietmuseum.be).

Thanks to *Last Orders*, magazine of CAMRA Suffolk branches.

## SPBW PRODUCTS

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

(white bone china with colour motif)

£10.00

### T-shirts

(woven motif on white L, XL/yellow L, XL/black L, XL, red L, XL) £9.00

### Sweatshirts

(Woven motif on royal blue/burgundy/jade, XL only)

£15.00

### Polo Shirts

(woven motif on royal blue L, XL/burgundy L, XL/jade L, XL)

£13.00

### Fleeces

(Navy, royal blue, bottle green or black, L, XL, XXL)

£21.00

### Ties

(multiple motif on blue)

£6.50

(multiple motif on brown or green)

£5.00

### Hats

(Acrylic knitted, woven logo on royal blue, black or bottle green;  
one size only)

£5.00

### Enamel Badges

(gold motif on black rectangle)\*

\*out of stock, new badges coming soon

### Greeting Cards (no message inside)

(pictures of 4 classic pubs; pack of 20)

£5.00

New: **bottle openers** and **key rings** with cask motif.

£1.00

We are also producing **coasters** and **fridge magnets**: contact Dave Samuels for details.

*You can admire our product range on the SPBW website!*

- **Please add £3.00 per order to cover postage and packing; if only ordering badges, bottle openers or key rings add only £1.00**
- **Please send your orders to Dave Samuel** (see page 2)
- **Please make cheques payable to SPBW** and include a telephone number or email address with your order. Allow up to 28 days for delivery.



*Fat Cat, Norwich (see page 9)*