

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

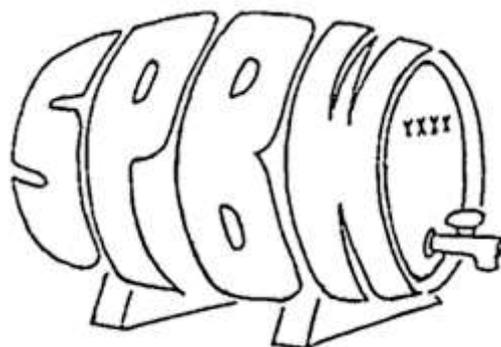
PINT in HAND

Number 111

August 2009



Nag's Head, Wheelock (see page 13)



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 2009 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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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

It's reckoned that about 50 pubs are closing every week in Britain. At this rate the theory is that the last pub will close in around 2029. On top of factors such as the recession and record tax rises (some blame the smoking ban as well), landlords are now facing a further threat to their livelihoods under Government plans to impose a new costly and bureaucratic "mandatory code".

Home Office Ministers say the code is needed to tackle anti-social disorder. Unfortunately it is the decent, responsible majority – the likes of you and me - that will have to pay for it. The cost to the British pub industry of implementing these new regulations would be an estimated £58 million in the first year and £38 million in subsequent years - costs that will hit landlords and consumers alike. Needless to say, rising prices will force yet more responsible drinkers out of pubs.

A few parts of the code may be sensible in themselves - preventing irresponsible promotions like "all you can drink for a tenner", for instance. But using the law in this way is further evidence of the nanny state going too far, not least because local councils and the police already have the powers they need to tackle alcohol-related disorder.

Pubs provide a good environment to be able to supervise and control drinking and encourage responsible behaviour; I suspect that very few of us frequent pubs where there is any trouble. The vast majority of pubs work closely with local police and councils to tackle anti-social behaviour where it occurs. So hitting pubs with more and more costs only helps to undermine the best solution to the problem of excessive drinking.

An interesting innovation was launched a few months back by our old mates in Bury St Edmunds. This is a beer engine which has the tap above the bar counter level so the consumer can see her or his drink transfer from tap to tankard. (As it happens I saw similar beer engines about a year ago in the Bermuda Triangle in Poole). I guess the theory is that with the conventional beer engine the drinker cannot tell if some noxious fluid is being pulled from the cellar (insert your Greene King joke here). This would hardly suggest much faith in the pub's cellar keeping skills. I don't have any problems with GK's initiative – the quality of the beer is all important after all. But would such a suspicious drinker cope with those pubs – relatively few these days admittedly – where the beer is fetched from the cellar or cool room where the casks are stored?

As ever, I'm most grateful to those members who have sent me material for publication. Keep it coming and make my life easier! I will particularly welcome contributions to the Perfect Pub and Last Orders features. Photos to accompany articles (JPEG please) are a major bonus. There is a notable lack of pictures in this issue which means there are more words to read.

See you all (figuratively speaking) next time round

Roger

JOHN GORE

We are sad to have learned of the death last December of John Gore, one of the seven Founder Members of the SPBW. Our condolences go to his widow, Sheilagh.

Unfortunately I know little about John's life and I only once had the pleasure of meeting him, at the Society's 21st Anniversary Dinner back in 1983. As far as I know he spent most of his working life with the Bank of England but also had a spell as Deputy Governor of the Bank of Botswana. I may deduce that John may have been a prime mover in the Society's formation: the minutes of the inaugural meeting record him as 'ably assisting' the late Dougie Chamberlain in bringing together the seven beer enthusiasts in the Rising Sun on that far off Friday in December 1963. At the March 1965 meeting it was reported that, for the first time, a woman had applied to join the SPBW. It was John who suggested that women should be allowed to join as *associate* members – well, this was 1965!

John's leaves John Keeble as the sole surviving Founder.

I am grateful to Huck Endersby, our member in Cape Town, for notifying me of John's death. Huck worked with John in Botswana and can probably claim to be the only SPBW member recruited to our ranks in that country.

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 possible 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.

OUT AND ABOUT

Our stall at the Ealing Beer Festival in July was moderately successful and raised a few more pennies for the SPBW coffers. Our next public appearance will probably be at the Wallington beer festival, 8 – 10 October. We also expect to be at Pig's Ear in early December.

It tends to be the same few people doing the hard work (all that good beer to drink.....) but we welcome volunteers to help out. Contact John Rooth if you fancy getting involved and helping to promote the SPBW.

SPREADING THE WORD

We regularly produce a publicity leaflet for SPBW incorporating a membership application form. Some of you may even have joined us having picked one up! We put these leaflets in friendly and obliging pubs but we would like to spread them as wide as we can, especially outside the London area. If you can help us with this, please let Roger Jacobson (details page 2) know and a bundle of leaflets will be sent with our eternal gratitude.

TONY LITTLER TROPHY

The next Tony Littler trophy inter-branch event will be held on **Thursday 3 September**, organised by Special Branch. It will take the form of a Treasure Trail in the Southwark area of south east London. The event will involve wandering the streets looking for the answers to questions and visiting a pub or two. It will end at an award winning pub owned by an independent Sussex brewery, where a small buffet will be provided.

The event will start at the 'new' Wheatsheaf, 24 Southwark Street, a main road off Borough High Street close to London Bridge station and Borough Market; it's a basement pub selling around 8 draught beers from a variety of beers. The organisers (John and Roger) will be in the pub from 6.30 at the latest (look out for the Trophy) and we hope that teams will be on their way by 7 and at the final pub by around 9.30.

We hope that as many branches as possible will take part. If you don't actually belong to a branch but fancy taking part, come along and you'll probably be able to make up numbers somewhere. It would be helpful if branches that plan to take part could contact Roger Jacobson (details on page 2) in advance.

TONY LITTLER (1939 – 84)

I guess that many members will be wondering who Tony Littler was and why he is commemorated with this event. Tony was a true SPBW stalwart through the 70s until his tragic death. He was a member of the Society's Campden Hill, Central London, Woolwich and, as a founder member, Ponds branches; in fact he spent his last evening alive at a Ponds meeting.

Tony was a native Lancastrian and worked at what was then HM Customs & Excise. Passionately interested in pubs, beer and breweries he was inevitable active in CAMRA from its early days, ending up as Brewery Liaison Officer for Fullers. He was also a member of the Brewery History Society and the Youngs 135 Association. In his involvement with SPBW he always turned down committee posts but, as a born organiser, was very active in arranging dinners, pub crawls, visits to breweries and the like. Quite spoken and impeccably polite, Tony was also an amusing raconteur and a ready wit who would liven up any conversation.

Tony was murdered late at night on 30 April 1984 and buried in his home town of St Helens. No one was ever convicted of his murder. Special Branch (the SPBW version) put up the Tony Littler Trophy as a suitable memorial to a fine man.

<p>Some back issues of <i>Pint in Hand</i> are available:- numbers 46; 49; 86-109. These can be obtained from the Editor (address on page 2) in return for 12 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>

NATIONAL WEEKEND

For the 2009 National Weekend we are steeling ourselves for a visit to **Sheffield** from **13 - 15 November** (Friday – Sunday). We already have two brewery trips arranged: to Kelham Island on Friday at 7.00 pm. (cost £5 with food extra); the Brew Company at noon on Saturday (cost £15, but includes a tour, tastings, and drinks; food can also be provided at extra cost).

Kelham Island brewery was founded in 1990 behind the Fat Cat and has no connection other than nominal with the Kelham Island Tavern which is very close by! – and which is Camra's current National Pub of the Year. Kelham Island's Pale Rider was Camra's Supreme Champion Beer of Britain for 2004. Brew Company is a much newer enterprise which first brewed in the latter part of 2008.

For the rest of Saturday, and on Sunday, we shall explore some of Sheffield's many excellent pubs (an all day tram card costs £3.00 and is the best way to get around). Further details available from John Rooth (see page 2) who can also provide details of recommended accommodation and travel. John also needs to collect money from those wishing to go along as both brewery trips require advance payment: £25 if you're going to both trips (the surplus to go towards food); £5 for just Kelham Island, £15 for Brew Company. Cheques to SPBW as usual please.

LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR

Twelve pubs have been nominated than usual this year, with quite a few changes compared to last year's list; our thanks to members and branches who contributed. The pubs to be judged are:

Bree Louise, Euston; Bricklayers Arms, Putney; Calthorpe Arms, Clerkenwell; Crosse Keys, Bishopsgate; Duke of Hamilton, Hampstead; Old Fountain, Old Street; Old Monk Exchange, Victoria; Pembury Tavern, Hackney; Red Lion, Ealing; Royal Oak, Borough; Wenlock Arms, Hoxton; Willoughby Arms, Kingston.

The onerous task of judging this little lot will occur in September and October under the expert guidance of Bill English. The winner will be announced in the next issue of PiH. No doubt some indulgent ramblings about the judging sessions will appear on our website.

SPBW WEBSITE

The SPBW Members Forum is still going strong at 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.

PERFECT PUB PAGE

Roll Out the Barrel

A South Buckinghamshire free house has become a welcome unlikely outpost for beer from the wood. The ***Stag and Huntsman*** is a utopian rural gem, situated in the idyllic National Trust brick and flint village of Hambleden in the Chiltern Valley. The village has appeared in countless TV productions and period films, due to its quaint, timeless setting and original cherished architecture, which includes a focal point well-pump, sited in the main square. The Stag is Hambledens' sole village pub, which being part of the Hambleden Estate, was fairly recently purchased by Swiss financier, Urs Schwarzenbach, for an undisclosed sum, allegedly circa £38 million. Urs is rumoured to be worth in the excess of £850 million and a pal of Prince Charles. Thankfully the S & H didn't undergo any drastic alterations after the change of ownership and carries on with its rustic charm unimpaired and intact.



Under the astute leadership of landlord Andy Stokes, who orchestrated the 'beer from the wood' at this country retreat, the S & H has now a new enthusiastic brethren of invigorated locals and other real ale connoisseurs, who have discovered a 'new taste' in their pint pots. Wadworth's 6X (4.3), has been an ever-present real ale on hand pump for many years at this pub, but recently been upgraded to being sourced from wooden casks, instead of the traditional metal variety.

Take-outs of the 'new' 6X taste have increased as the beer graces the bar, alongside locally brewed stalwart ales *Rebellion IPA* (3.7) and *Loddon Hoppit* (3.5). A rotating guest beer, usually from a South-West micro or independent brewery, also joins the permanent hand-pumped Thatchers cider, a rare treat in this vicinity for the local 'apple dappers'.

An annual themed beer festival is staged on the weekend after the August Bank Holiday and, weather permitting, is well-attended and in its sixth year since the events inauguration. The Stag and Huntsman has become a regular entrant in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide in the last decade, due to its dedication to real ale and the inn's esteemed standing locally. Long may this continue!

Alan Sheppard (who took the picture)

THE SPORTING LIFE

Andy's Roving Report

Situated on the same road as the Guy Fawkes Inn (of which I wrote in PiH 109), the **Lamb & Lion Inn** is an attractive Georgian building, standing next to the city walls at Bootham Bar, on the western side of the centre of York. Built in 1756 by a butter merchant apparently, the L & L was, I seem to remember, a hotel until quite recently. Anyway, it is now definitely part of the York pub scene although unlike most hostelries it also has a dozen en-suite rooms for the weak and weary – a proper ‘inn’ in fact.

I'd been summonsed to York by Sue, who had graciously chosen the city to be the backdrop for part of her birthday festivities. As she alighted from her palanquin I put her in a good mood by strumming a lyre and reciting the lines:

*Is this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burned the topless towers of Mablethorpe?*

Having adjusted her toga she bade me lead on and thus we entered the L & L (note the tile work at the doorway) turning left from the corridor into the bar room. This was well packed with diners and we wended our way between them to the bar. There were three cask ales available: Old Mill's Willow's Wood, Marston Moor's Bishop and one called Hattersley Stout, the brewers of which I know not. We both chose the Bishop; condition? Very good; price? Very steep at £2.90 a pint!

Anyhow, squeezing through the munchers, we headed back into the corridor and did a left and a sharp right, following the sign to the snugs. These are two very small interlinked rooms with dark wooden floor boards, though one room has padded upholstery for its seating whilst the other contains plain wall benches for us rugged types. The décor here is easy to describe – it is a rhapsody in brown, from floor to ceiling. The effect is rather more pleasing to the eye than I possibly just described and is quite soothing. If you continue through the snugs, you have a choice of going into the parlour room to the right or heading outside to the beer garden. This is up two flights of steps and the sward extends to the walls with a striking view of York Minster in the other direction.

I think this would definitely be a favourite with sun worshippers during suitable weather, but the continuous flow of tourists along the parapets overlooking the garden may impinge on the ol' consciousness somewhat.

The Lamb and Lion is definitely worth a visit, though like the Guy Fawkes Inn up the road, the prices are top whack. Visit their website for information on accommodation, meals etc: mail@thelambandlion.co.uk.

Lamb & Lion Inn, 2-4 High Petergate, York YO1 7EH; 0845 609040

The **Sportsman** in Huddersfield re-opened in April this year after having spent many years as a keg Bass house. In fact, nobody I have spoken to can remember it selling the real stuff! You will all be pleased to hear that this hostelry is now part of the burgeoning empire run by Mike Field and Sarah Barnes, proprietors of both the West Riding Refreshment Rooms at Dewsbury

and the Cellar Bar at Batley. One would therefore expect huge improvements and I (for one) was not disappointed.

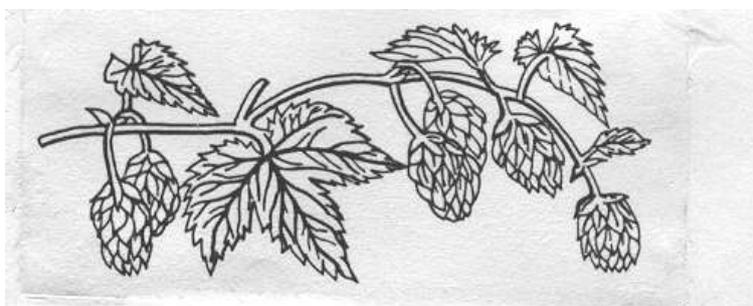
The Sportsman is about 5 minutes walk from the railway station – walk out into St George's Square, left at the George Hotel and stroll down the road passing beneath the viaduct. The pub is on the left, resplendent in its old Bass livery. No Bass shall ye find within though, as this is a showcase for mini-, micro- and regional brewers' offerings, all sold at competitive prices. When we called in on the first Sunday in May, the session beers cost £2.00 to £2.30, with the most expensive being the 6.5% 1872 Porter from Elland Brewery at £2.60. Out of 8 beers available, 1 was from Black Sheep, 2 from Tim Taylor's with the others being from the likes of Mallinson's and Anglo-Dutch. The beer quality was of the best and service was immediate.

The building itself is of interest. According to my info, it was built in 1930 to replace an older hostelry of the same name and was part of the estate of Seth Senior's Brewery, which sold out to Hammonds' in 1947; enthusiasts please note the Hammonds' windows. According to a newspaper article, many of the features are from the 1950s, though I thought they looked a couple of decades older. Was there once a revolving door in the entrance? If so, it is a great shame that it is no more.

There are three rooms in all: there's the bar room, plus one smaller room to the left and another on the right. The parquet floor in the main room is authentic, though the tiling around the bar counter is a newer addition, put down as the flooring there was in poor condition. The curved and ribbed lintel over the counter gives an art deco touch to what is usually a completely featureless piece of architecture. The window lamps and wall mirrors seem to have been chosen with a 1930s ambience in mind. The floor in the right hand room is covered in 1960s-type linoleum tiles (agh!) but there's a piece of history here that I almost overlooked – the original bell pushes for waiter service.

The Sportsman is yet another excellent inn to visit in a town that is becoming positively crowded with good pubs. Opening hours are, as far as I am aware, as follows: Sunday – Thursday noon until midnight; Friday and Saturday noon until 1 am.

The Sportsman, 1-3 St John's Street, Huddersfield HD1 5AY; 01484 421929; www.undertheviaduct.com/sportsman/



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 **Monkey Puzzle** at 30 Southwick Street, London W2 (corner with Sussex Gardens). 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. Website: 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.

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

COMMON & ALDBRICKHAM: Meetings usually held in Reading; contact John Dearing 0118 958 0377 or 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

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.spbwingston.co.uk.

NORTHERN IRELAND: Contact Mark Hutchinson for details of meetings and events: 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@ntlworld.com or the website 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

WEST RIDING: Meets (usually) on last Sunday morning in month in various pubs in and around Leeds. Brewery trips, day trips and crawls and other socials. Contact Graham Hewitt (0113 2624574; 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!

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.

BRANCHES IN ACTION

In June **Campden Hill** branch went on the 'Arry Hart Memorial pub crawl. This was organised by Sue Hart and with a good representation from various South London Camra people, we had a good turnout. We were able to use the tram line to take in some of Wimbledon and Croydon area's best pubs. Amongst the highlights, the Dog & Bull & the Princess of Wales represented Youngs. The excellent free houses the Trafalgar, the Green Dragon and the Claret all had a fine selection of beers. Hopback beers were in fine fettle in the Sultan. Good food was obtained in Wetherspoons, the Prince of Wales or the Green Dragon. Rare beers sampled included, Dorking No1, Palmers Best, Gravesend Shrimpers, Ascot Posh Pooch, a good range of Dark Star, Downton MPH, and Cotleigh Seahawk. Tram connections were exemplary, despite leaving 3 of the group on the platform between pubs 1 and 2, and the day was a fitting memory of 'Arry who would have approved.

Later in the month a small group dined in the Italian restaurant Casa Mia in King St Hammersmith. This was very good value for money. An appetiser in the Salutation (Fullers) was better than the Young's in the Hammersmith Ram. We went on a joint day out with common branch to Windsor, and the group enjoyed some very pleasant pubs. August events include a trip to Poole.

Chesapeake Bay Branch remains strong with close to 160 members so far this year. We have had some great meetings including a recent Pub Crawl through the Fells Point neighborhood in Baltimore visiting a few favorite haunts and ending back at Max's Taphouse where 4 firkins awaited. The night featured a total of 9 different cask offerings. We eagerly await our annual Bus Trip which will include the Stoudts, Victory and Sly Fox Breweries. Our annual crab feast will take place on 19 September with 5 firkins and nearly 20 bushels of crabs, plus other barbecued foods. This year will mark the Inaugural Baltimore Beer Week www.Baltimorebeerweek.com being organized by the Chesapeake Bay Branch founder, Joe Gold and immediate past president, Dominic Cantalupo. This collaborative effort includes some of our region's biggest beer names and will basically be a 10 day "Celebration of All Things Beer in the Land of Pleasant Living". Opening tap will take place aboard the USS Constellation in a huge media driven event. The highlights will be the 12000+ person Oktoberfest and an expanded Chesapeake Real Ale Festival which will be hosted at The Pratt Street Ale House (fka The Wharf Rat). Pratt Street has retained the services of Head Brewer Steve Jones formerly of the Firkin Brewery in Coventry and Loughborough. This should be the largest festival yet with perhaps over 600 people and 50 rare firkins.

Members of **Common and Aldbrickham** branch had an enjoyable pub crawl of Brighton back in February a long with members from London branches in memory of our founder, the late Peter Smith, drinking plenty of Harvey's beer. We have unfortunately had to suspend our vintage bus trips for the current season because of non-availability of drivers. However, at time of writing we are looking forward to a joint foray to Royal Windsor with our good friends from Campden Hill and also on the cards is presentation of a Pub of the Year award to the Foresters Arms in Reading which sells – guess what? – Harveys.

The **FÝÇÝ** branch is still going, but only former NEC Products managers Dave and Peter as members. In order to use our sizeable funds we are going to visit Kaya, a small village up in the mountains, for a BBQ at a restaurant, with a few drinks to wash it down with. This will be a Monday or Tuesday evening in the next two weeks.

RACS have enjoyed the usual busy programme of visits to local pubs and beer festivals. At the AGM in May Chair Jan Mead was re-elected along with the rest of the committee. The Gate Beer Festival from 27 – 30 August will see RACS run the tombola stall and the summer competition: bring your large onions and odd-shaped vegetables! On 26 September there is a visit to the Blackfriars brewery in Great Yarmouth.

Special Branch's annual canal jaunt was cleverly timed so that we had wet and dull weather all week as we tackled the Four Counties Ring, starting just north of Nantwich. Despite the rain and some long hours afloat we still managed to find a succession of worthy pubs and a good variety of ales. Some of the best of these pubs have been covered in these pages before (notably the Blue Bell at Kidsgrove and Bhurtpore Inn, Aston) so let's pick out a few new discoveries. The **Clifford Arms** at Great Haywood (200 yards from the Trent & Mersey Canal and just south of the junction with the Staffs & Worcs) has a comfortable bar and adjoining restaurant. Alongside a selection of mainstream ales (eg Old Speckled Hen) are a couple of guests which included, on our visit, Harviestoun's excellent Bitter & Twisted which was consumed with alacrity by our troop. The **Nag's Head** at Wheelock was mentioned in PiH 105 but a reminder is in order, not least because of its locally based beer range: two from Dunham Massey brewery in north Cheshire lined up along one from Three Tuns in Shropshire. Two Marston pubs: the **Bridge Inn** at Brewood and the **Star** in Penkridge provided a friendly welcome and some good ales from the brewery's range. Better still was the **Swan** in Stone, just a stone's throw from the canal. This converted warehouse boasts 8 or so ales on tap, again with the emphasis on fairly local brews, and should be a compulsory stop if you're passing through. We were there for Tuesday quiz night and all three of our teams came away with prizes that were consumed later in the week. The pub voted our favourite of the week was the **Haberdashers Arms** in the tiny hamlet of Knighton, some 6 miles south east of Market Drayton. Although a mile or so uphill from the Shropshire Union, the walk is rewarded with a compact and cosy pub with a cheery welcome from both sides of the bar. Banks's mild and bitter plus a guest ale went down well and although we didn't arrive until dusk was drawing in, the pub stayed open until midnight – and it was downhill going back to the boats!

Another regular branch event is our July trip to the Lake District where this year we were blessed with very hot weather. While the Editor and others were trekking the fells, the more sedentary members visited some of the area's classic pubs, not least the Watermill Inn at Ings where they had the pleasure of bumping into SPBW stalwart Alan Risdon. A return to the Crown at Hesket Newmarket for the excellent ales and food was also much enjoyed.

Wantz branch has had a fairly quiet summer so far. Our one outing was a brief pub sojourn on the Isle of Dogs. First stop was the **George**, opposite Crossharbour DLR station: a large imposing pub that has been revitalised

under fairly new management. Six draught ales are on offer, mostly fairly standard stuff (which is not to disparage the likes of Landlord and Deuchars IPA) with a regular guest beer from Cornwall. Sadly from our point of view the pub was crowded with seriously deluded Chelsea fans watching their game against Barcelona on the TV, so we packed up and went to the **North Pole**. This of course is a pub and a very pleasant one at that. Tucked away in a side street off Marsh Wall, the NP is a homely little place, hardly the sort of pub you'd expect to find in the shadow of the concrete and glass monstrosities of Canary Wharf. Landlord, Black Sheep bitter and London Pride are on tap and there's a friendly greeting from behind the bar. Looking ahead we have day trips to Norwich and St Albans lined up not to mention a Vietnamese meal in Hackney.



The George



The North Pole

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

It can be very hard for a branch, old or new, to bring in more members. Time is not always available to organise regular social get-togethers to greet new people, nor to organise campaigning events to increase membership. The result is that we all inevitably get older and the new blood needed to keep the branch going, and to keep it active, does not come along.

One excellent way to combine all these tasks is the annual branch Pub of the Year Award. Having a PC makes it easy to construct and print a specialised award, and an A4 picture frame can be bought quite cheaply. The hard part is getting the publicity. Over the years (as a Chairman of a CAMRA branch) I found that the majority of pubs are very willing to take on this task and organise the local newspapers to attend. To back this up the branch needs to spread some copies of Pint in Hand and membership forms around the bar.

I formed the Northern Ireland SPBW branch in the mid 1990's but it disappeared after I stood down in 1997. I was asked why I did not start it again. I certainly do not have time to get new members, but I did start the branch a few years back and I use the above method for publicity. This year will be the fourth year I have presented the award - <http://www.spbwni.co.uk/poty.html>. Perhaps this might help other branches.

Mark Hutchinson, Chairman, SPBWNl

PAUL & BERNIE'S TRIP TO JERSEY

Being the first part of an account of a brief stay in Jersey by Paul and his virtually teetotal wife Bernie which will be short on holiday information but long on pubs visited and beers available/sampled. The basis for the pubs itinerary was the Jersey pages of the CAMRA GBG 2007 and 09 (I didn't invest in 2008) for, in my experience, without some sort of starting point (and sometimes even with, as you will see) you waste a lot of time visiting total, well, wastes of time.

Wednesday 13 May

We arrive at Jersey airport around midday and pick up the hire car. Ready to roll by 12.30 but can't check in before 2.00 so we head north to Greve de Lecq to seek out a spot of lunch. Try the **Moulin de Lecq** (GBG 07,09). This is an olde worlde water mill with the cog mechanism clearly on view behind the bar, a large fireplace and seating ranged around the walls. Draughts available are Skinners Betty Stogs, Jennings Tom Fool, Ringwood Best Bitter. Sample a pint of Betty Stogs for I have not tried it before, and all is very acceptable. However the menu is more suited to evening dining in the separate restaurant area so we go to the **Prince of Wales**, on the strength of the 'Randalls' sign prominent on the wall (I had heard of Randall's before and recalled it being a local brew). However, none is available, and in fact this fairly characterless hotel/bar has no real ale and no atmosphere, but it does have very reasonably priced food and good views of the bay. The weather forecast is poor so we sit on the outside terrace to get what might be the only rays of our stay before setting off on the hotel hunt.....

Much later, having discovered that the address 'St Brelade's' refers to the parish of St Brelade's not the resort of that name, we discover the hotel in the resort of St Aubin's in the parish of St Brelade's. Confused? We were.

After a short siesta to get over lunchtime beer and trauma of hotel hunt, we clip a discount voucher from the tourist guide and head off in search of that purveyor of traditional Jersey fare, Pizza Express in St Brelade's (the settlement, in the parish of the same name. Got it yet?). However, en route we divert to Ouaine and **The Old Smugglers Inn**. This is a cosy multi-roomed establishment near the seafront (sea wall) / slipway, marred only by 4 bitchy old men stabbing their acquaintances in the back while they are not there to defend themselves. Draughts available, of which I sample the first and last are Draught Bass, Skinners Betty Stogs, Marstons Dragons T'Ale

Post-pizza (and by golly it was busy for a Wednesday night – must have been the locals cashing in on the *bogof* vouchers, and who can blame them, for that is exactly what we were doing) we returned to St Aubin's and sought out the **Old Court House** on the harbour front (only by now it is dark so the view is somewhat diminished). This is a strange place in my view. It can't quite decide if it is posh restaurant, small bistro or cosy bar, or a bit of all three depending on which part of the building you are in. The cosy bar part is full so we sit in the deserted small bistro bit, while I go to order. Real ales are Draught Bass (off, i.e. had run out) and Sharps Doom Bar.

Well, Hobson's Choice, so I order a Doom Bar, but then the sweaty barmaid (Scottish, that is, not perspiring) says "It might not be Doom Bar, it might be

'Boomerang', the boss has gone out and I know the Doom Bar was running out but I don't know if it's been changed or not and the label is on the bottom of the barrel so I can't read it". (All this in a Glaswegian accent).

I reply "In that case I will try the Boomerang, I have not tried it before. Who brews it?". She shows me the new pump clip, pristine in its plastic bag. It is for Bombardier. So I have a pint and it is served through a tight sparkler which I don't think is appropriate for either Doom Bar or Bombardier, but I don't say anything. Anyway the sparkly-headed pint arrives (it is Doom Bar) and some of the customers from the cosy bar bit leave so we jump into their graves and end up in relative comfort, but only to finish the pint and go for an early night (don't forget this tour features a virtually TT driver, the lovely Bernie, to whom I am most grateful and for whom I do not wish to upset the applecart). Make do with a 'reassuringly expensive' pint back at the hotel.

Thu 14/05/09

After a hard morning's sight-seeing, tea-drinking, cake-eating etc., details of which have no place in PiH we head for St Mary's (the settlement in the parish bearing the same name) and the **St Mary's Country Inn** which serves Draught Bass and ?? (at this point) Liberation Ale

We arrive at 2.30 so, of course, too late for a bite of lunch. I sample the Liberation Ale, but the foreign barman doesn't know who brews it or where it comes from. He thinks it might be Mary Ann (Mary Ann (who reminds me of an Alice Cooper track of my youth, from Billion Dollar Babies, I think, or possibly Elected) is the brand name of the ubiquitous island keg – of which more below). It tastes like a fairly unassuming but not unpleasant session beer under 4%, but pump clips and beermats are not giving any secrets away, and the barman doesn't seem in a position to.

Anyway, peckish and lunchless, and with tears in our eyes, we head as hastily as my map reading allows to **Les Fontaines Tavern** (GBG 07) in the settlement of nowhere in the neighbouring parish of St John's (It's easy once you get the hang of it). Hoorah! Lunch is served, a tasty cheese ploughman's (incl. fiery pickled onion – Bernie says no more kisses for me today). Real ales are Draught Bass and Ringwood Best Bitter. I sample one of each, and the Bass is fine but the Best is past its namesake, although to her credit the bargirl did warn me it was near the end, and it was not off, just a tad lacking in life. I pick up a booklet of Randall's pubs on the island and discover they no longer brew beer but are merely a pub chain. Mystery of the Prince of Wales solved.

En route to further tourist fun Bernie fancies a 'nice cup of tea', so I persuade her to set the controls for the heart of Rozel (settlement in parish of St Martin's) and the **Rozel Bay Hotel**. Draught ales available are Courage Directors, Bath Barnstormer and Jersey Brewery Liberation Ale (discover here that it is brewed in Languerville, so put 2 and 2 together to arrive at Jersey Brewery). However a nice cup of tea is not – "sorry sir, but I'm on my own and I've got a bar-full", i.e. 3 people playing pool in the next room plus me'n'Bern. Am tempted to wee-wee on the floor of his toilet in revenge but refrain. Instead, head back to the hotel via Gorey, sight-seeing, tea-taking and doing-touristy-things-as-one-must-to-keep-everyone-happy. Partake of today's siesta back at base before heading off into St Aubin's for a further traditional

Channel Islands meal of lamb jalfrezi 'with all the trimmings'. Next up, not in the GBG itinerary but prepared to give it a go, is **The Tenby** where the draught ales are Bath Barnstormer and Draught Bass.

The former is OK, but nothing better so, recalling an attractive looking pub we passed earlier in the day at Beaumont (parish of, I think, St Peter's), make on the spot decision to explore. On arrival at what turns out to be **The Forester's Arms** we find it blowing its trumpet as the 'the oldest ale-house on Jersey', which I take to be a promising sign. Wrong! The attractive exterior conceals a drab and dingy interior, and worse still, no real ale. Even worse, it is ladies' darts night and the door is smack next to the throw so we endure the glares of several fat fishwives whose game we have disturbed. Therefore rather than depart at once I cravenly decide to brave a pint of keg Mary Ann Premium. (Mary Ann, my life was built around you, stars and sand – not!). I suppose it was OK as kegs go, and served to remind me what I haven't been missing all these years. Thence homeward to another reassuringly expensive nightcap.

Part 2 follows in the next issue.

Paul Rogers

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The cover of the August 1999 issue of PiH, like many others, depicted a pub that was not otherwise mentioned: in this case the Lord Nelson in Brighton. It actually happens to be a worthy establishment, one of Harveys many excellent pubs. There was a fair amount of doom and gloom inside (PiH not the pub), what with reports of pubs and breweries closing and the expansion of the Punch Taverns estate (and look what good that did them!)

10 years earlier the cover pub was Ye Olde Watling in the City of London, for many years the Society's *de facto* headquarters. The illustration shows it as Charrington pub but I believe it's now part of one of the major pubcos and offers a wider beer range than of yore, at typical City of London prices.

A glance at the Branch Newsletters of June and July 1980 shows the Society to be fairly active both at branch level (even if Campden Hill could 'only' attract about 22 members to meetings) and in terms of contacts with breweries and other organisations. These were days when a good few breweries, even regionals, were still less than fully committed to real draught beer. Campden Hill branch had visited McMullens, then still a very traditional outfit but with only 54 out of 116 tied houses offering non-pressurised ales; and Gibbs Mew of Salisbury, who produced nothing but dustbin beers and were 'totally unfriendly' (and now defunct!).

There was a profile of long time stalwart Oliver (Ossie) Tillett. Among his many accomplishments he could claim to be the first to visit every Wadsworth house, having previously done the tour of Grays pubs before the Chelmsford brewery closed in 1974, as well as the old Youngs 135 list. There was also a report of the fire that destroyed Alexandra Palace on 10 July, just a matter of weeks before the third scheduled GBBF. The event was held in a number of marquees on the site and SPBW was able to run a stand as in previous years.

BEER BOOKS REVISITED

THE 'FORGOTTEN' GOOD BEER GUIDE

It is assumed that the reader is at least vaguely familiar with the basics of the early days of CAMRA. However, little has been published about the enormous effort which must have gone into production of a document dated 1972. It was the first ever attempt to produce a comprehensive list of recommended pubs selling real ale.

Consider the logistical problems: first, few members, probably not dotted conveniently around the country, to carry out the surveying. Second, having gathered the hand written information, no personal computers, just typewriter(s) and an instant print shop around the corner to produce the pages. Third, manual collating, fixing together with staples, clips or glue and enclosing them in a miscellany of covers. Finally how many copies to run off, who was going to sell them and to whom.

Within a start to finish timetable of only six months and despite these seemingly insurmountable difficulties (this small band of enthusiasts were no faint hearts) some 200 copies were assembled. It could have been a few more but an unequal number of each sheet had been printed – the first to run out therefore left varying sized piles of 'spare' sheets, it was apparently decided to dump them and run out to the pub!

The contents deserve scrutiny: as mentioned, covers had been gleaned from various sources; they were of differing thickness and colour, some had rounded corners. A single sided frontispiece, fixed on the outside with wall paper paste, showed a 'foaming pint mug' logo and 'The Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale' across the top, the words 'The Good Beer Guide' printed underneath each other in large upper case down the middle and '25p November 1972' at the bottom. A double sided introductory sheet headed 'Where to find REAL DRAUGHT BEER' in a sloping hand written script with a sleeve and pointing hand symbol was divided into a number of paragraphs. First, the threat to real draught ale both from the promotion of keg and tank beers and the dispense of real beer by carbon dioxide pressure. Second, a definition of real draught beer and acceptable methods of its dispense. Third, a 'no guarantee' that every recommended pub conformed to those definitions reference to the form at the back for making a complaint or recommendation. Fourth, mention of the possibility of a 'commercial much more comprehensive' publication in 1973 and an apology for the 'many gaps' (Henley on Thames several entries, York none). A heading 'HOW TO USE THE LIST' needs no elaboration. A heading 'FINALLY' invited readers who were not members of CAMRA to use the application forms (sic) at the back. Both sides of the sheet included a couple of beer related 'caricature' drawings.

Six double and one single sided sheet of pub entries were arranged in two columns alphabetically by town. Each contained the name (where more than one, also in alphabetical order) and a secondary location where located in a small nearby village, a telephone number, opening hours, beer(s) available and, in most cases, a (very) brief description. A single sided sheet headed 'RECOMMENDATIONS' was divided equally between an upper panel for up to four inclusions and one beneath for up to three complaints.

A final single sided sheet was headed 'feeling bitter about your pint?' in large letters. In a smaller and different font (see 'typewriter(s)' above) and alongside a full length drawing of a gentleman in a blazer looking suitably fed up, was condemnation of the policies of the (especially larger) brewers producing and promoting an increasingly inferior product and ripping out handpumps from more and more of their pubs thereby threatening the very existence of favourite beers and pubs. Something needed to be done, and done QUICKLY it proclaimed. There followed an outline of what CAMRA was doing – campaigning vigorously as a beer drinkers union. It concluded by inviting readers to complete the cut off application form at the bottom of the sheet and send it with 25p to The Membership Secretary. That was it!

Additional research would be required to establish how many of the pubs listed remain, still sell real ale or have appeared in any (or how many) of the subsequent thirty five Good Beer Guides of which this was the precursor, but that's another story.

Despite all the limitations it was a courageous start. Let us, therefore, when next in our local, raise a glass of real draught ale in recognition of the efforts of those early 'warriors'. I'll certainly drink to that – cheers!.

Alan Risdon

Acknowledgement is made to Michael Hardman, the leading early warrior, for correcting several factual errors. This article originally appeared in the CAMRA Westmorland Branch Newsletter 'Lakes & Ale'

Last Orders – from Copenhagen

One of the world's most expensive beers has been launched by Carlsberg, the second brew in its Vintage trilogy. Vintage No. 2 is sold for the price of DKK 2009 (more than 250 Euro) a bottle, and only 600 bottles of this exclusive beer are brewed. Vintage No. 1 was launched a year ago and created interest all over the world.

"With the Vintage trilogy we want to push the boundaries for what a beer can do, and to challenge the luxury wine segment in the gourmet restaurant market by utilising our innovation and brewing capabilities", says Morten Ibsen, Brewmaster at Carlsberg. Vintage No. 2 has, as the only contemporary beer, been matured in J.C.Jacobsen's original crypt-like cellar from 1847 where it has been stored in French oak casks for 100 days. The beer has a jet-black colour and espresso-like foam and reveals flavours of vanilla and cocoa/mocha. The aroma is distinct with hints of tar and ropes, which come from the peat-smoked, Scottish malt, which has been transported from Scotland solely for this brew. Vintage No. 2 is perfect pairing for oysters, shellfish, Parma ham and cheese, and if you crave for something sweet, chocolate and crème brûlée also goes with the beer.

Each Vintage bottle is labelled with a hand stencilled lithographic print by Marco Evaristti: "We chose Marco to make the prints as his art is centred around being uncompromising, innovative and pushing boundaries just like the Vintage trilogy", says Morten Ibsen. Marco Evaristti has made five different prints for the beer each with the elephant as the recurring motive. Only 125 items of each has been made which make the empties real collector's item.

I can't remember where this came from so I can't acknowledge the source – but thanks anyway. I assume this is serious!

SPBW PRODUCTS

40th 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.



Clifford Arms, Great Haywood (see page 13)