

**SOCIETY for the PRESERVATION of  
BEERS from the WOOD**

*(founded 1963)*

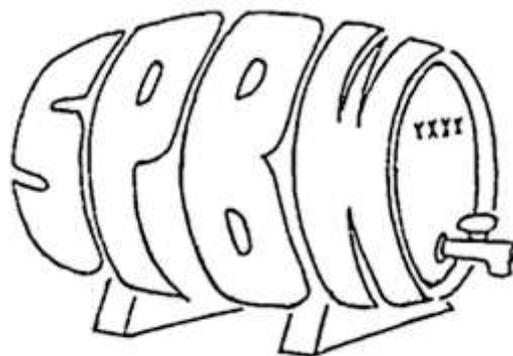
***PINT in HAND***

*Number 118*

*May 2011*



*The Crescent, Salford (see page 15)*



## ***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 August 2011 issue should reach the Editor by **25 July**.
- 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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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 couple of issues ago I made a passing reference to the merits, or otherwise, of Sharp's Doom Bar. Like it or not, it's become a popular and widely distributed brand. So popular in fact that a company known as Molson Coors has bought brewery. Both Molson (Canada) and Coors (Colorado, USA) are major purveyors of bland brews who got into the UK market by buying out what was left of Bass. Although based in Burton on Trent, most of the brewing is carried out under licence elsewhere. Looking at the list of MC's brands in the GBG shows some rather uninspiring names – I was surprised to see that M & B Brew XI is still being brewed! Obviously Molson Coors are unwilling to find someone to brew something worthwhile at Burton and consider that it's easier to buy a brand off the shelf.

So where does this leave Sharp's? Will they continue as before without interference from Burton or even from across the Atlantic? How long before some big shot at MC decides it's inconvenient to brew in and distribute from such an obscure corner of the UK as Cornwall, and moves brewing to Burton (or another more central brewery)? And what about Sharp's other brands, not least the excellent Cornish Coaster? Will MC be bothered with them?

Much farther north, there have been rumblings about the maverick brewery that is Brew Dog, based up in Aberdeenshire. Brew Dog have gained a lot of infamy – and plenty of publicity – for brewing some ridiculously strong ales. Their Punk IPA (a very tame 6%!) can be found on supermarket shelves around the country – and it seems that most of their output is for the bottled trade. But BD have gained further infamy by making their draught ales available in keg form – their first tied pub, in Aberdeen, offers only keg beers – and apparently claim that 'kegged craft beer, not cask, is the future in the UK'.

Funny that – I thought that cask ale was actually a growing market at the moment. There may have been some sound and logical reasoning for the growth in keg beer 40 – 50 years ago but things have changed. Beer is largely kept well and the rising number of small breweries means that beers don't have to be distributed so widely (apart from the likes of Doom Bar!). And I've drunk Brew Dog beers in London that have tasted just fine in cask form. So guys, be a bit cool about the kegs, ok? Keg beer may have its niche but no more than that. Cask is the future!

Let's face it, keg beers may have become all-dominant had it not been for the campaigning work kicked off by the Founder Members of SBPW. The baton was then passed to a body I sometimes jocularly refer to as a 'beer consumer organisation based in St Albans'. The UK beer scene would, I'm very sure, have been very different, and much the poorer, had it not been for this organisation's efforts. So, a very happy 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary to CAMRA!

*Roger*

*Articles on beer/pub related issues are always welcome! Contributions to the Perfect Pub Page and Last Orders features in particular, as well as responses to my fevered ramblings above. If sending articles by email it would be very helpful if they are in Arial plain 12pt, single spacing with absolutely no formatting! Pictures should be in JPG format. Thanks.*

## ***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.

## ***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

It was standing room only in the upstairs room at the Royal Oak for the 2011 NEC AGM. It was also the end of an era as Chris Callow stood down as Chairman; he had held the post since 1995 having been Vice-Chairman for the previous two years. Living in Devizes as he does, Chris has had to put himself out quite a lot to get to meetings and his efforts have been much appreciated. Best wishes to Chris and his family.

So up steps Mike Hall to the coveted Chairmanship, having been 'Vice' since 1998. Taking his place in the Vice-Chair is Alasdair Boyd. Good luck to both of them. The National Executive Committee for 2011/12 is therefore:

Chair: Mike Hall

Vice-Chair: Alasdair Boyd

Secretary: John Rooth

Treasurer: Jim Woodcock

National Membership Secretary: Roger West; Branch Liaison: Bill English

Products: Dave Samuel; Publications: Roger Jacobson

Webmaster: Mark Hutchison

## ***MESSAGE FROM THE NEW NEC CHAIRMAN***

I am pleased to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Chris Callow for his contribution over many years as our Chairman. I was a little reluctant to succeed him because I believe that, as we approach our 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2013, we should try to attract younger members, particularly to the NEC. I started my pub going in the traditional way, a sneaky brown ale at the age of 14 provided as a rite of passage by my elders. Later in the 1960s I discovered the delights of milds, bitters and stouts for myself.

SPBW has passed the campaigning baton to CAMRA but we can complement their role by supporting pubs and brewers which maintain traditions. Through our branch and national activities we meet like-minded people and help spread the message and, hopefully, make new friends and enjoy ourselves in the process. In conclusion, as we look forward to ways to celebrate our first 50 years, let us take the opportunity to revitalise the Society for the next 50!

***Mike Hall***

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE AGM**

Welcome again to the Royal Oak in London, we have had many homes over the years, but this is the only one that is a previous winner of London Pub of the Year competition (the current winner is the Dog and Bell). Other SPBW London Pub of the Year winners have been a little too far out to hold our meetings, but who knows what will happen in the future. But meetings are nearly always held on the second Monday of the month, unless Easter or another Bank Holiday gets in the way.

I have had great support from my fellow officers over the period I have been Vice Chairman and then Chairman (which is over 7000 days, or 10 million minutes). Some stalwarts have worked with me through thick and thin while others have done their jury service and moved on. I thank each and every one of them for their help over the years as the society would struggle without them. We are nearing our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and need to develop for the future, as I am one of the three living Chairmen I feel it is time for a change, and I wish my successor all the best for the future.

Regular events over the year have, as always, been well attended. For the national weekend get together; Shrewsbury was invaded with visits to the breweries Stonehouse and Salopian. If you did not make it, then Pint in Hand 117 gives an excellent flavour of the weekend. The regular Beer and Curry days are also well attended; look out for the adverts in Pint in Hand.

Beer festivals are an area where we do seem to struggle showing presence. This may be a case of there being too many festivals, but too few members available to help. This year's probables are Ealing (July) and Wallington (October) with us giving Pigs Ear a miss again. If anyone wants to assist by volunteering, please contact anyone on the National Executive Committee who will be pleased to ~~snap your hands off~~ take your details and inform you of how you can help.

In the last twenty years we have moved into the Internet; started using social networks and bulletin boards; trialled beer engine enhancements; increased our product line; made inroads at taking back the colonies. Sadly we have seen breweries and members pass into history, but we have new members, branches, and of course breweries. Hot off the press, we are also asking via our editor Roger if members would like to receive PiH via email, not just to save cost, but to ensure you can get it in a timely way. PiH archives are also available via the website, though you have to be a member to get the recent copies.

So, remembering the time when, on winning a yard of ale competition, I was presented with a plaque with the inscription, "When you have lost your Inns, drown your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England", let's hope that the future year will be successful, and let's keep visiting the pubs and supping the ale. To the Society....

*Chris Callow*

**SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BEERS FROM THE WOOD**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2010**

| <b><u>YEAR</u></b> |  |              | <b><u>YEAR</u></b> |
|--------------------|--|--------------|--------------------|
| <b><u>2009</u></b> | <b><u>Income</u></b>   |              | <b><u>2010</u></b> |
| 536.15             | Sales of Society Products and Donated Items                          |              | 279.37             |
|                    | Less: <u>Cost of Sales:</u>  |              |                    |
| 742.65             | Opening Stock at Cost  | 783.88       |                    |
| 414.00             | Purchases for Resale   | 63.25        |                    |
| (783.88)           | Closing Stock at Cost  | (675.43)     | <u>171.70</u>      |
| 163.38             | <u>Gross Profit from Sales</u>                                       |              | 107.67             |
| (31.40)            | Funding for Events and Miscellaneous                                 | 42.00        |                    |
| 225.00             | Branch Affiliation Fees  | 235.00       |                    |
| 1141.00            | National Membership Fees   | 1019.44      |                    |
| 4.70               | Interest on Deposit Account  | <u>5.44</u>  | <u>1301.88</u>     |
| <u>1502.68</u>     |  |              | 1409.55            |
|                    | <br><b><u>Expenditure</u></b>  |              |                    |
| 795.71             | Pint in Hand   | 1138.37      |                    |
| 92.00              | National Membership Provision  | (76.10)      |                    |
| 75.00              | AGM Expenses   | 100.00       |                    |
| 47.19              | Administration and Sundry Expenses                                   | 85.51        |                    |
| 49.52              | Depreciation   | <u>42.09</u> | <u>1289.87</u>     |
| <u>443.26</u>      | <u>Balance - Surplus of Income over Expenditure (2009 - Surplus)</u> |              | <u>119.68</u>      |

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2010**

| <b><u>YEAR</u></b> |   |                | <b><u>YEAR</u></b> |
|--------------------|---|----------------|--------------------|
| <b><u>2009</u></b> | <b><u>General Fund</u></b>  |                | <b><u>2010</u></b> |
| 4804.04            | Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2009                         |                | 5247.30            |
| <u>443.26</u>      | Surplus of Income over Expenditure (2009 - Surplus)               |                | <u>119.68</u>      |
| <u>5247.30</u>     | <u>Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010</u>                   |                | <u>5366.98</u>     |
|                    | <br><b><u>Represented By:</u></b>                                 |                |                    |
|                    | <b><u>Fixed Assets</u></b>  |                |                    |
| 2392.69            | Equipment at Cost   | 2392.69        |                    |
| (2112.10)          | Depreciation to Date  | (2154.19)      |                    |
| <u>280.59</u>      |   |                | 238.50             |
|                    | <br><b><u>Current Assets</u></b>                                  |                |                    |
| 783.88             | Society Products at Cost  | 675.43         |                    |
| -                  | Sundry Debtors  | -              |                    |
| 37.21              | Cash in Hand  | 73.04          |                    |
| 355.07             | Balance at Bank   Current Account                                 | 214.11         |                    |
| <u>5103.05</u>     | Deposit Account   | <u>5402.30</u> |                    |
| <u>6279.21</u>     |   | <u>6364.88</u> |                    |
|                    | <br><b><u>Current Liabilities</u></b>                             |                |                    |
| 1312.50            | National Membership Provision                                     | 1236.40        |                    |
| -                  | Sundry Creditors  | -              |                    |
| <u>1312.50</u>     |   | <u>1236.40</u> |                    |
| <br><u>4966.71</u> | <br><b><u>Net Current Assets</u></b>                              |                | <br><u>5128.48</u> |
| <u>5247.30</u>     | <b><u>Net Asset Value as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010</u></b> |                | <u>5366.98</u>     |

## ***OUT AND ABOUT***

Our next public appearance will be at the Beckenham Beer & Cider Festival on 28 and 29 May. This is at Beckenham Rugby Club, Balmoral Avenue, Beckenham BR3 3RD. Nearest rail station is Elmers End; buses 54, 194, 358 and 367 run from Lewisham and Croydon. Admission is free.

We also hope to run a stall at the Ealing Beer Festival, 6 – 9 July.

Running stalls at beer festivals is an excellent way of publicising the SPBW, recruiting new members and selling stock. But this does involve people helping out and we do need volunteers, rather than rely on the very small loyal band who give up their time to maintain an SPBW presence. It's not exactly hard work and you are allowed to drink beer! So if you can help out at Beckenham or (more particularly) Ealing, please let John Rooth know. Thanks!

## ***BEER & BUFFET***

This year's eve of GBBF social gathering will be at the **Old Monk Exchange**, Strutton Ground, off Victoria Street, London SW1H 0HW, on **Monday 1 August**, 7.30 for 8.30. The OME is a basement bar serving four handpumped beers. It's just a couple of minutes' walk from St James Park tube station (District and Circle lines) and half a mile from Victoria main line station. Numerous bus routes go along Victoria Street. Lovingly hand-crafted tickets are just £5 and are available from John Rooth (details on page 2) – please send SAE and make cheques payable to SPBW. See you there!

## ***NATIONAL WEEKEND 2011***

This year's event will be based in the historic city of **York, 18 – 20 November**. We have lined up a visit to York Brewery on the Friday evening and we are hoping to arrange a visit to another small brewery in the area for the Saturday. There are of course, plenty of worthy pubs in York to visit and the city has no lack of non-drinking attractions. As we get more firm information together – including accommodation – we'll put it about by the usual channels. We hope to get another good turn out as these weekends always prove to be highly enjoyable.

## ***PINTS IN PUBS***

We have at least a dozen publicans among our membership. If you are such a person and you are organising a beer festival, or any other special event in your pub, why not let us know? We can advertise the event in these pages and hopefully encourage our members to get along.

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

Who will be the next winner of this prestigious award? Worthy pubs such as the Pembury Tavern, Dog & Bell, Royal Oak, Harp have been recent winners and there are plenty more potential winners out there. Over the next few months we will take on the task of finding the next LPotY.

All SPBW members – and branches - in the Greater London area are invited to nominate their favourite pub. Please contact Bill English (details on page 2) for a nomination form. *Pubs will not be considered for judging unless a completed form is submitted.* Closing date for nominations is **10 July**.

Judging will happen between August and the results will be announced in the November PiH. If you would like to be part of the judging panel, please let Bill know. Be warned though, this does involve visiting some excellent pubs and drinking their beers.

## ***HAPPY HARP***

Talking of the London Pub of the Year, we're delighted to learn that our 2008 winner, the Harp at Covent Garden, has become CAMRA's national pub of the year (the first London pub to achieve this accolade). Our congratulations to Binnie Walsh and her excellent staff. I was in the Harp only last night (as I write) and the beer, service, and general atmosphere was every bit as good as ever. And our award looks much better than CAMRA's!

## ***BEER & CURRY***

The latest B & C extravaganza in February brought forth a dozen or so members, including a few from Cheshire and Wolverhampton. We kicked off at the Eleanor Arms in Bow (Shepherd Neame) and then followed the 8 bus route to the Camel in Globe Road, Bethnal Green (Sambrook beers) and the nearby Carpenters Arms in Cheshire Street (sorry, can't remember the beers, but it's a good pub), ending up at the Pride of Spitalfields, where Crouch Vale Brewer's Gold is always popular. We dined at City Spice in Brick Lane where the food was tasty and good value, especially with a couple of beers as part of the deal. The more hardy (or stupid) of us returned to the Pride for a nightcap.

## ***PINT IN HAND BY EMAIL***

How would you like to receive PiH by email rather than by post? This would be of particular value to overseas members and would save the SPBW a few bob in terms of postage and envelopes. Beware that PiH is a substantial document (PiH 116 was 5,300 KB) so you may need broadband if it's not to jam your inbox.

If you want to go for this, please email Roger West and Roger Jacobson (details on page 2) and we'll take it from there.

## ***SPBW ONLINE***

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.

The SPBW now has its own **Facebook** page (if that's the right technical term). If you're not familiar with this 'social networking' site, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) – set yourself up with a password and put 'SPBW' in 'Search' and all will be revealed!

## ***TONY LITTLER TROPHY***

Congratulations to Wantz branch, winners of the latest inter-branch competition. Organised by Central London branch, the event was held at the Wood, close to Marylebone station. This was a new pub for most of us: although the beer range was not especially exotic – Broadside, Doom Bar and Rev James – and prices were in the 'central London' range, the ales were in fine condition.



*Roger demonstrates his trophy lifting skills to Linda West of Central London branch (photo by Joe Reeves)*

The competition consisted of two quizzes and two games of Devil Among the Tailors, a form of table skittles. The boys from Wantz showed their class at both disciplines and ended up as clear winners; as a team member maybe I should be more modest, but I ain't, so there! For the record, there were also two Central London teams, plus Campden Hill and Kingston, the latter including the various 'out of town' members who showed up.

All in all, a very enjoyable evening. It's now down to Wantz to organise the next event. The Olympic Stadium is in our area and looks like a suitable venue.

## ***MEET the BRANCHES***

*We have 17 affiliated branches and details of these are listed below. We always encourage members to join a local branch and get involved with its social activities. Most branches would appreciate new members so you can expect a warm welcome. Branches tend to be fairly informal, meetings being free of boring bureaucracy.*

*If you don't have a local branch, why not start one? Bill English, (Branch Liaison Officer, address on page 2), will be pleased to tell you what you need to know.*

**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, 42 Brendon Street, London W1. Contact John Rooth (see page 2). Events are listed under the Campden Hill Forum on the bulletin board/SPBW Forum: <http://www.spbw.com/bb/>

**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 Ed James, email [ed.james2@us.army.mil](mailto:ed.james2@us.army.mil) Website: [www.spbw.org](http://www.spbw.org).

**CHESHIRE REAL ALE PEOPLE:** Are based mainly around the Crewe/Nantwich area. Informal meetings are held each Monday from 7.30 in the Borough Arms, Earle Street, Crewe (some beers £1.50), then to Hops, Prince Albert Street at 9.30 – all real ales £2 a pint for Camra members. 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. 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 280822) or Iain (07707 465750) for details of meetings.

**KINGSTON:** Meetings held first Wednesday of each month in the **Willoughby Arms**, 47 Willoughby Road. Contact <http://spbwkingston.co.uk/diary/> or email [mike.lapworth@talk21.com](mailto:mike.lapworth@talk21.com)

**NORFOLK BEARS:** Meetings held first Thursday of each month at 12.30 in the *Fat Cat*, 49 West End Street, Norwich. The landlord, Colin Keatley, regularly supplies three pins of Fat Cat (and other) beers from the wood. More details at: <http://www.spbw.com/norfolk/about.html>

**NORTHERN IRELAND:** Normally meet at the Bridge House (JDW), Belfast, on a Friday night after 8pm, at the pillar beside the hand pumps. Occasionally, the Tuesday Bell (JDW), Lisburn, after 8pm on a Saturday. Contact Mark Hutchinson for more details: [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@ntlworld.com](mailto:meadspanner@ntlworld.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.

**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 (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](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!*

## **EMAIL ADDRESSES**

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

Some back issues of *Pint in Hand* are available:- numbers 46; 49; 86-117. 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.

Most issues from 90 onwards can now be found on the SPBW website, in PDF format.

## ***FROM THE ARCHIVES***

In the great tradition of irrelevant front cover pictures, PiH for May 2001 depicted a pub named the Horns in Crazies Hill, Berkshire, apparently a Brakspear house. Anyone know it? Is it still a pub? Inside, my editorial commented on Whitbread having sold its 3,000 pub estate. Isn't it odd how these great old brewing names can disappear? Is any beer still brewed under the Whitbread name anymore? You may see the name on the odd old pub sign still but otherwise poor old Whitbread seem to have been airbrushed from the scene.

There was only substantial article in that issue, inevitably from the eloquent pen of Andy Whitley. He gave an entertaining account of a trip to Antwerp (all the way from Wakefield by coach!) starting with a visit to Boelens Brewery at 10 in the morning. The first sample – Bieken Blonde at 8.5% - must have made for a lively start to the day! Closer to home, we note that the Ipswich branch had commenced operations recently with a trip to the Fat Cat in Norwich. Woodforde Norfolk Nog served direct from the wooden cask was one of the attractions here.

Way back in May 1991, PiH 38 reported that the NEC now has a full complement following the AGM. The two new boys were Tony Wilkin and Geoff Coke, fairly obscure names these days but fine chaps. The NEC had launched a publicity booklet, which was being distributed to members around the country to be put in pubs for passing to discerning drinkers. We did recruit a few odd members (insert your own joke here) this way. Wantz branch had visited Robinson's brewery, our modest number augmented by members and friends from Nottingham and Yorkshire, not to mention two Swedish girls! I don't think they joined our pub tour afterwards. The branch also had a minibus outing to the Prince of Wales, Stow Maries in deepest Essex. This had only recently reopened as a free house but it's featured in the GBG ever since.

Andy's report was from closer to home this time - just across the Pennines to Stalybridge. One of several pubs he and his companions visited was the Station Buffet, which has stood on the eastbound platform since 1840. I had the pleasure of a short stop here a few years back and it is indeed a splendid place for a pint or two between trains. The 2011 GBG describes it as "an institution for educated beer drinkers" where the range of up to nine ales can be enjoyed "in convivial Victorian splendour".

## ***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. Thanks to those of you who have already helped in this way.

## ***BRANCHES IN ACTION***

**Campden Hill** enjoyed a 4 pub crawl in February in Holborn/Aldwych. We started at the Castle in Furnival Street, which offered a wide choice. Next the Old Bank of England, a grand opulent pub selling the Fuller's range. The Devereux is one of many Punch Taverns rebranded to Taylor Walker and finally, very adjacent is the Edgar Wallace which offered about 10 handpumped beers.

The Keith Hudson darts trophy was held in the Old Fountain off City Road. This was deservedly won for a second time by Ken Davison, who reached the double quickest and promptly hit double 15 to clinch the final. The beer as ever was varied and in good condition, unlike some of the darts players who were variable and in poor condition.

South Wimbledon received another visitation from us, for an evening at the excellent Trafalgar Arms, followed by and Eastern meal in Slurps, which offered a good value mixture of Chinese, Japanese and Thai food.

On 25 May we shall be visiting the Seven Stars in Carey Street (7.30) and Ye Olde Mitre in Ely Place, Holborn (9.00).

**Common and Aldbrickham** Branch held its 4<sup>th</sup> Memorial Pub Crawl in honour of founder, Peter Smith, on Saturday 5 March on which branch members were joined by John Rooth from London and the NE. The crawl commenced at the attractive Kennetside pub, the Dundas Arms at Kintbury and then continued in the nearby town of Newbury, where some members recalled a memorable trip with Peter to the racecourse and assorted hostelries. From being one of the few major Wetherspoon-free towns in the known universe Newbury now has one open, the Diamond Tap, with another due to open once structural problems with the building have been solved.

(John Dearing has asked me to record that the photos in PiH 117 attributed to him were in fact taken by Paul Forrest – RJ).

**Croydon Real Ale Preservation Society** continues to meet regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at The Green Dragon in Croydon High Street, where a constantly changing selection of beers on handpump and two beers from Hogs Back on gravity are served. Several CRAPS members used to drink in The Albert Tavern South Norwood in the days when it was run by one Binnie Walsh who went on via Clapham to run The Harp, Chandos Place, the national pub of the year for CAMRA and past SPBW award winner. Over the years Binnie has been very kind to us, especially a couple of years ago when we suggested some beers she might like to stock and which turned out to be very popular. We decided to hold our own award and presented her with a piece of Waterford crystal. Binnie joined us in her upper room, stayed chatting and reminiscing with us for the whole evening and treated us to many pints of fine Sambrooks and Dark Star and plates of sandwiches, none of which we were expecting. A wonderful lady.

One of our members is an old friend of Peter Yarlett who is Miles Jenners' number two at Harvey's Brewery in Lewes, a connection that has proved fortuitous over the last several years. Each June Peter has offered a private brewery tour for CRAPS and friends and last June the take up was as enthusiastic as usual. After a comprehensive tour of the mashing boiling and fermenting facilities, we hit the

sampling room to taste some special beers, including some Knots of May at 3% abv and Imperial Russian Stout at the other end of the scale, 9%. While we were there, Peter mentioned that he was initiating a microbrewery within Harvey's and most interestingly, that it was planned to use wooden casks (see page 20) for some brews. Whether or not these would be available for general consumption needs to be clarified ~ will report back after our next visit in a few weeks. Watch this space...

CRAPS also meet every Tuesday as well as the 1st Tuesday of the month, but these meets are only divulged to those members on our email list. Venues are usually mailed out the day before. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/crappers/> and sign up if you'd like to be kept in touch of weekly meets. If you seem sound, we'll let you in!

**Kingston** Branch is, and has been since its inception in 1997, based at the Willoughby Arms in North Kingston. Recent social events have included our Christmas meal at a Belgian restaurant in Richmond and pub crawls around Surbiton and Teddington. We've attended beer festivals at the Willoughby Arms (an excellent dark beers themed Valentine's Festival) and Battersea. Several members recently enjoyed one of the regular beer tasting evenings at realale.com in Twickenham where we met the brewer from the South London Kernel Brewery and sampled his Black IPA (as interesting as it sounds) and the Imperial Russian Stout.

Possibly uniquely for SPBW branches we have an active group of cyclists. Last year on our inaugural ride we pedalled from Kingston to Windsor via two excellent pubs (the Royal Marine in Lyne and the Happy Man in Englefield Green, finishing at the Carpenters Arms in Windsor). Our autumn ride started again in Kingston and utilised the Thames Path and Grand Union Canal with stops at the Fox, Hanwell and the Bricklayers Arms, Putney.

Republican branch members celebrated the royal wedding by spending the day cycling along the Basingstoke canal from Odiham to Woking. We also enjoyed the annual St Georges Beer Festival at the Willoughby Arms at the end of April and are looking forward to visits to the Kingston and Ealing Beer festivals. Plans for further cycle rides utilising the Thames Path and the Grand Union Canal are pencilled in for later in the year.

**Norfolk Bears** continue to meet on the first Thursday lunchtime of the month at The Fat Cat, West End Street, Norwich, where the Landlord provides a regular selection of his own, and other, fine ales from wooden pins. Future expeditions to Woodforde's Brewery, various beer festivals and summer trips both to the Black Country and to the City and East End of London are being planned, but it takes considerable effort to leave the Fat Cat these days.....

**RACS** have a busy time ahead - a visit to Half Moon, Hitchin for St George's Day celebrations. Someone else doing the organising of food for a change. Half Moon has won CAMRA POTY for North Herts three years running and is run by RACS Members Wendy and Howard. Trips to come are to Great Yarmouth and Blackfriars brewery in June and several beer festivals out and about round Essex and Hertfordshire. AGM is May 26th - watch this space for change of Committee personnel (I don't think!)

**Special** Branch is girding its drinking loins for its annual canal week, this year on the Kennet & Avon in Wiltshire. Hopefully we'll be meeting Coate branch to hand out a thrashing at skittles.

**Wantz** branch enjoyed a pub walk in the Fenchurch Street area in March; highlight was probably the Redemption ales in the Peacock, Minorities. Since then we've had yet another return visit to Singburi, an excellent Thai restaurant in Leytonstone and, by the time you read this, another pub walk, this time in the Euston area.

**West Riding** branch will be visiting Wensleydale Brewery in Leyburn on Saturday 14 May. The next branch meeting is at the Sportsman, St John's Road, Huddersfield, on Sunday 29 May, starting 11.15am. Other future events: pub crawl south and west of Leeds, Saturday 11 June; BBQ at the Grove, Holbeck, Saturday 2 July from 14.00; coach trip to Newcastle, Saturday 16 July

## **A SALFORD SUP** ***Andy's Roving Report***

Salford is pretty much a graveyard of closed and derelict pubs, so it must be a great boon for the locals to have a hostelry like the **Crescent**. It stands in the Crescent Conservation Area, the street once being listed as Windsor Crescent. According to Salford City Council, it started off in the early 1800s as a terrace of 3 dwellings and presently has 3 stories and a Welsh slate roof. I'm not sure when it became a pub, but I understand it was once known as the Red Dragon. Continuously appearing in the Good Beer guide for nearly quarter of a century and surviving all that the Chancellor can throw at it, it obviously has to have that certain something extra.

We entered the room to the right of the entrance, which I think is the tap room and definitely of a spartan type. There were 9 beers available (from various breweries) on the bar, including a stout and a porter. The beer quality was very good and we had a couple of pints apiece here while I had a wander through the other rooms. The door to the left of the entrance leads into a small carpeted room that I imagine might be the lounge. There's still a serving hatch here to the bar room. At the top end and up a few steps is a tinier but more basic snug. Here I found the jukebox and no less than 4 handpumped ciders on a miniscule bar counter. Were they having a bit of a scrumpy promotion or mini-fest?

I read afterwards that the Crescent also has a function room suitable for live turns and which holds about 100 people. This is no mean hostelry in any sense of the word! There was a fair number of customers present at the time of our mid-week visit and who seemed to come from just about every walk of life, which is normally the case for any good traditional public house. Therefore I say unto you that the Crescent is another hostelry that I can recommend.

**The Crescent, 18-21 The Crescent, Salford, M5 4PF, Lancs: tel 0161 7365600;**  
website [www.thecrescentsalford.co.uk/](http://www.thecrescentsalford.co.uk/)

## ***VALENTINE'S DAY DRINKING***

It was a grey and wet February day when Susan and I caught the Belfast-Stranraer ferry for our tour of Dumfries & Galloway (D&G), and it got worse as we had to wait an extra hour before sailing. Getting to Dumfries before the Sulwath Tap closed was a close call, but was just not possible now. I had hoped "Plan B" would consist of several pints where we were staying - the ***Douglas Arms***, a great family run hotel practically across the road from the Brewery. Sadly, the ale was not on tap that night, so we decided to scout out the lay of the land and did a crawl around the town. Eleven premises later and not one drop of real ale, though the local Legion had some interesting bottles. Saturday made up for it however, with a fleeting early morning greeting to Allen Henderson (MD of Sulwath) we journeyed the byways of Kirkcudbright taking in some of the touristy things as one does. In the afternoon we got to meet Alan Johnson and his wife Eileen at the ***Sulwath Tap***, a very busy place on a Saturday afternoon. The good news was that the hotel had ale that night so it was a few pints and an early night.



*(L to R): Alan & Eileen Johnson, Susan & Mark (SPBW NI) and Allen Henderson (Managing Director).  
Thanks to Mark for the photo*

14 February soon came round and Susan and I met up with Alan & Eileen for a lovely relaxed Valentine's Day repast at the Laurie Arms, Haugh of Urr, renowned for good food and excellent ales. It was a cold and dark night which progressed to heavy hailstones and we awoke to a snow blanketed countryside. We drove through snow and fog to reach Dumfries where, believe it or not, the sun was blazing in blue skies. A couple of pints at the New Bazaar and then back to the

hotel. Well, to be truthful I took Susan to the Gem Museum and a late lunch at the relaxing Creebridge House Hotel.

A few days later we met with Jim Henderson (Allen's father and General Manager/Consultant of Sulwath). Jim was with his new (to me that is) wife Irene and we had a grand lunch at the Caven's Arms. After lunch Jim and Irene left on business and we toured the town. This was an opportunity to take Susan to the Globe Inn for some ale and food and to let her see Rabbie Burn's bedroom. She was fascinated by the poems he hand etched onto the window glass. We had time to visit the Tam O' Shanter and the Robert the Bruce (JDW) where we got some fine pints of ale.

Sadly, time marches on and it was we had to head home, but not before purchasing a metal mini-cask of good Sulwath ale! We journeyed back via Portpatrick to find the Harbour House Hotel closed for renovations. Still a good walk around in a bracing breeze did help. It was the first time that Susan had seen that side of Scotland and it has been several years since I was last there. For me it was catch-up time and my last call was to try and find an old friend who once run the Ruddicot Hotel, Stranraer. I was not able to locate him, but the barmaid in the nearby Grapes said she would pass on my regards the next time he was in there. It was actually the NI CAMRA branch that brought this ale outlet to the attention of the D&G branch so many years ago

For anyone who has thoughts of visiting the area I would recommend the local D&G CAMRA branch publication which lists the good places to visit in the area. Too many to mention all of them and too many for us to visit this time around. I have to say that there are more ale outlets than years ago and I found the quality very good, all bar one pint which was at the end of the cask and the owner was more than happy to let me have another. The selection of ales is fantastic compared to the times when I (as Chairman) led small parties of CAMRA NI members around the D&G countryside. If only I could get more free time <sigh>.

*Mark Hutchinson*

## ***INNS AND OUTS OF AUSTRIA***

In what has become an annual event, I took part in a research project at the end of January to the other Aussie (Austria) with two friends, Dave and Russell, who have yet to savour the pleasures of the SPBW.

The flight to Innsbruck was uneventful apart from the usual add-ons by the "budget" airline for taxes, check-in baggage fee and booking fee. Innsbruck, capital of the mountainous province of Tyrol, is necessarily a compact city, squeezed into the valley of the River Inn. It dates back to Celtic times but its great days started in around 1490 when it became the imperial capital of Maximilian I. What the visitor sees now is an attractive network of narrow medieval streets highlighted by the Goldenes Dachl (Golden Roof) and a Roman-style triumphal arch erected by Maria Theresa in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

As to liquid attractions, Austria tends to be overshadowed by Germany but has a proud tradition. Most drinking places are bars where you can eat well or

restaurants with a good beer menu. One of the best bars is the **Theresienbrau** in the main pedestrian street; unremarkable near the entrance, it spreads out towards the back to show its in-house brewing facility. The Wieselburger Spezial is their standard, light and fruity, while my favourite was the Kaiser Doppel Malz, rich and dark with a hint of chocolate. As in all good Austrian bars, there is table service and it pays to drink in quantity (2 euros for a “pfiif” (0.2 litres), 2.60 for a “kleine” (0.3 l) but 3.40 for a “grosse” (0.5 l) which makes it comparable to London prices. What is hard to discover is the alcoholic content, which might encourage binge drinking, but I think most of them are around 5%.



*Russ and Dave wait for James to take the photo and buy them a beer*

Another atmospheric place is the **Elferhaus** (“number 11”). It tunnels into a medieval arcade, with its non-smoking area deep into the heart of the building. Mohren is a light standard, backed up with Franziskaner Weissbier (white beer) and even better, Diesel (Wieselburger light and Kaiser Malz half and half). There are several other places besides the Elferhaus, such as Limerick Bill's, but why is it that you can find an Irish pub anywhere in the world but hardly a decent Austrian restaurant in London? The food is good everywhere in Austria - not just Wienerschnitzel but also such delights as Specknodelzuppe (a clear soup with a cricket-ball sized creation of bacon, noodles and liver in the middle. And no better place to enjoy these than the place with the sign of the crow, the Krahvogel. The dishes were washed down with Zipfer or Stiegl, two good light standards - or for those who had had enough beer, a radler (a refreshing lemon/lime dilution to the beer which puts shame to the term “shandy”).

For the middle two days of the trip, we took a 3-hour train trip to Zell am See, with a taxi from there to the resort of Kaprun. The lake at Zell am See was frozen over but it made a pleasant walk around the edge. Kaprun is an attractive skiing centre and the mountain views outside the Pension St. Georg were breathtaking, especially as the early morning sun started to catch the highest peaks. No skiing for us; we did search for a club for middle-aged types but had to make do with venues for the younger crowd. The high standards of Zipfer, Gosser and Stiegl helped to drown our frustrations.

Although I fully support drinking out, to leave Austria without taking home some cans would have been rude, especially at 6 euros for 4 litres. Last year I absent-mindedly put some in my hand luggage, only for the security men to confiscate them at the departure gate, but this time Dave and Russell kindly carried them in their check-in luggage. As I write, I have started on the Zipfer Urtyp (5.4%) but the Edelweiss Weissbier (4.5%) and the Starckenberger Gold (4.9%) await. Always read the label---too bad I can't speak German beyond asking for the bill ("die Rechnung bitte")!

See you on the slopes? Meet you in the bar, more likely!

*James Collonette*

### ***Last Orders – information wanted***

SPBW member Dave Pickersgill is researching the **Worksop and Retford Brewery**, which was demolished in 1962, as background for a novel. He would love to hear from anyone who worked for the company in the late 1950s or early 1960s. He is particularly interested in finding an original recipe for Worksop Ale, and in speaking to anyone who can remember the taste, or the experience, of drinking this, or any of, their beers.

The Worksop and Retford Brewery was a large employer and a landmark enterprise for the whole of Bassetlaw. Worksop malt was critical to the success of brewing operations in Manchester and the Midlands. Victorian photographs provide an indication of the sheer size of the operation. Ornate wrought iron gates opened out onto a large eye-catching and decorative five storey building, built from bricks of different colour in a style in favour at the time.

The brewery was acquired by Tennant Brothers of Sheffield, in 1958 and demolished in 1962 when Tennants was taken over by Whitbread. The company was voluntarily wound up by a Special Resolution passed at an Extraordinary General Meeting held at the Exchange Brewery, Sheffield in April 1970. Ironically, the latter closed some years ago.

If you have any information that might be useful, please contact Dave Pickersgill and John Stocks via ***dave@stksbge.demon.co.uk***.

## **SPBW PRODUCTS**

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£9.00

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*(woven motif on royal blue L, XL/pale blue L, XL)*

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*(gold motif on black rectangle)*

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- **Please send your orders to Bill English** (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.



*A welcome sight at Harvey's brewery (see page 14). Thanks to Peter McGill for the photo.*