

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

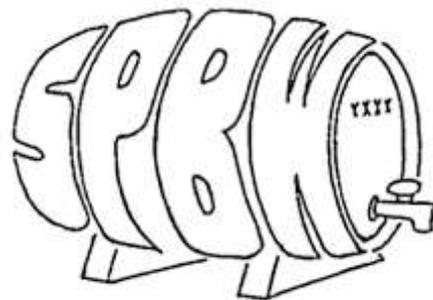
***PINT in HAND***

*Number 122*

*May 2012*



*The Bartons Arms, Aston*



## ***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 2012 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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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***

I read a newspaper article a few weeks ago about a worrying trend for pubs to be closed and re-opened as or replaced by supermarkets or other shops. It didn't say anything about the pubs which were being lost and I wondered whether they were owned by pub chains who are more concerned about real estate values than trivial details like providing a benefit for the community. Let's face it, we all need more shops, don't we?

A similar circumstance has affected one of my own regular haunts, the Wenlock Arms in Hoxton, north London. This was a privately owned free house renowned for its range of ales from small and obscure breweries. When the owners wanted to sell up after 18 years it seemed the most likely buyers were developers who would demolish the pub and build flats instead. The Wenlock was saved by Camden Council who put a preservation order on the place. It's now open after a very short break under enthusiastic ownership, with much needed refurbishment in the pipeline. That's a happy ending. But the Wenlock was/is a thoroughly viable pub. What's the fate of other, less successful pubs that may not get the chance to improve and prosper?

Just a mile up the road from the Pint in Hand offices a major 4-yearly international sporting event will be taking place in July. I'm not going to mention it by name in case it's a breach of copyright. The organisers have beaten the drum about what a great showcase the Ol.....this event is for London. Should you have tickets for any of the events and fancy a beer, don't expect any of London's fine brews to be available. The only beers will be provided by the official 4-yearly sporting event brewery – I won't trouble the organisers by naming it but it originated in Amsterdam and its UK arm is based in Edinburgh; neither of these cities is in London. I suggest you ignore the stadium bars and take the short walk to the Eleanor Arms, a genuine pub serving good beers (albeit from Kent rather than London), run by an SPBW member!

A much more exciting event will happen next year, namely the SPBW's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As was hinted in the last issue we are planning to make this a year-long celebration with special events taking place around the country. I'll be setting out a detailed plan of action in the next issue, but in the meantime if you have any ideas or, even better, you want to organise something for us, please let me know.

Finally, you'll be aware that Royal Mail has hiked up the price of postage. We have enough stamps at the old rate to cover mailing PiH during 2012. We do want to hold our membership rates at current levels as long as we can do viably. Remember we do offer the option of sending PiH electronically and if you take advantage of this it will help us to save money.

*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 4JU. 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***

The upstairs room at the Royal Oak was brimful of members for the AGM, so much so that some prospective attendees couldn't even reach the top of the stairs. The prospect of an election for the Chair was the big attraction but Mike Hall comfortably held off Patrick Deller's left-field challenge. Patrick was, however, elected to the NEC which is thus comprised as follows:

Chair: Mike Hall  
Vice-Chair: Alasdair Boyd  
Secretary: John Rooth  
Treasurer: Jim Woodcock  
National Membership Secretary: Roger West  
Branch Liaison and Products: Bill English  
Research & Development: Dave Samuel  
Publications: Roger Jacobson  
Officer without portfolio: Patrick Deller  
Webmaster: Mark Hutchison

Brent Wheatley was appointed Hon Auditor. Amid all this excitement, £45 was raised from a raffle. Pride of place among the various donated items was a presentation box of two ceramic tankards and a flagon – reward for completion of a Fuller's passport scheme in the 1980s, courtesy of Nick Martin. A generous buffet was scoffed by those present and the range of Harvey's beers was in fine form as usual.

Patrick may be a new name to some of you so let him introduce himself:  
*I'm 61, have lived in Twickenham for about 30 years and retired in 2011 after 36 years in HM Customs & Excise, HMRC and UK Border Agency doing a variety of things but sadly never managing to get a brewery officer post. The last 4 years were spent on drugs (but not in that way!). My main interests are historical, the Tudors, military and naval history, the history of London and the history of brewing. I collect brewery ties and London pubs. I joined Central London Branch at the suggestion of Andy Shuttleworth about 25 years ago and have never regretted it.*



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

I should start by thanking Chris Callow, who after many years of sterling service passed the baton to me. Although work commitments prevented him from staying on the NEC, he has been invaluable in enabling Pint in Hand to be produced at an extremely advantageous price. At this point mention must be made of Roger Jacobson who has been editor of Pint in Hand for more years than he would like me to reveal. It is thanks to his efforts and the regular contributors that we have the first rate journal that we see now. SPBW's finances are healthy, as detailed in the accounts, thanks to Jim Woodcock for his work during the year.

During the year we had a presence at CAMRA's beer-fests at Ealing, Beckenham, and Wallington and thanks to those who helped make them a success for us and to those who donated items to sell alongside SPBW products. We held a Beer & Curry Sunday and two Beer & Buffet events in the Old Mitre and in the Old Monk in London.

The Tony Littler evening was organised by Central London branch and Wantz won the Trophy. The London Pub of the Year was won by the Royal Oak and thanks are due to all involved. There was another highly successful National Weekend, held in and around York and my thanks go to those who helped organise it.

The AGM is a time for looking forward, as well as back. In the coming year we will host the usual Beer & Buffet events and Wantz branch will host the Tony Littler evening.

I look forward to leading SPBW into its 50th anniversary year in 2013. The NEC will plan special events but we are also looking to branches and members for ideas and to organise their own events. We hope to add to our product range to reflect the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and they, together with the events will be published in Pint in Hand, so please keep us up to date.

Finally, I would like to thank the NEC for their support and you the members and branches.

*Mike Hall  
Chairman, NEC*

## **OUT AND ABOUT**

We will be running stalls at two beer festivals this summer:

Beckenham, 7 – 9 June (Beckenham Rugby Club, Balmoral Avenue, Beckenham BR3 3DR); and Ealing, 4 – 7 July (Walpole Park, Mattock Lane, Ealing W5 5BG). Needless to say, volunteers will be needed if we are to make a success of these ventures. If you can help out please let John Rooth (details page 2) know. Further ahead we hope to be at the Wallington festival, 11 – 13 October.

## ***NATIONAL WEEKEND 2012***

The 2012 National Weekend will be held in **Chester**, on the weekend **16 – 18 November**. We have arranged visits to two local small breweries:

*Frodsham* on the Friday evening; *Northern* on Saturday morning. We are planning a coach tour of some of the best rural pubs in the area after the latter trip.

Chester is an attractive and historic city on the River Dee and Shropshire Union Canal. It boasts a good selection of pubs (7 listed in current GBG) including two brew-pubs. We'll be touring the best of these pubs when we're not otherwise engaged.

If you're interested in coming along – as you should be! – please send a deposit of £35\* (cheques payable to SPBW please) to John Rooth (details page 2) and we'll pass on further vital information as it becomes known.

\*There is a charge for both brewery visits, which will both provide food.

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

Who will be the next winner of this prestigious award? Worthy pubs such as the Royal Oak, Harp, Pembury Tavern and Dog & Bell 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 **8 July**.

Judging will happen between August and October 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.

## ***BEER & BUFFET***

We are holding our annual Eve-of-GBBF Beer & Buffet bash on **Monday 6 August**. Venue is Ye Olde Mitre, 1 Ely Court, Ely Place, Holborn, London EC1N 6SJ. Tickets are £5 (checks payable to SPBW please) from John Rooth (details page 2).

Ye Olde Mitre is a genuine historic pub, hidden away in a narrow passageway between Hatton Garden and Ely Place. Although now owned by Fullers, it offers a few non-Chiswick beers from around the country, always well-kept and served by the redoubtable Scotty and his staff. Nearest tube stations are Farringdon (Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan lines) and Chancery Lane (Central line); several bus routes go along High Holborn.

## ***TONY LITTLER TROPHY***

Congratulations to Campden Hill branch, who won this year's contest by some distance. Central London, Kingston and RACS also competed in an enjoyable evening hosted and organised by Wantz branch. The format of the contest was mostly quizzes, with some Shut the Box thrown in. 25 or so members turned up to enjoy some excellent buffet to wash down the Youngs beers (with St Austell Tribute as guest) at the Calthorpe Arms in Grays Inn Road – a highly recommended establishment. Campden Hill now has the pleasure of sorting out the 2013 event.



*Mike (R) of Campden Hill is overjoyed to receive the Trophy from Roger*

## ***BEER & CURRY***

There was a slightly smaller turn out than in the last couple of years but those who came along were able to drink and eat well in London's East End. We began at the Eleanor Arms in Old Ford Road where we had the usual cheery welcome from Frankie and family and enjoyed the well-kept Shepherd Neame beers. A bus ride along Roman Road brought us to the Camel in Globe Road; this former Ind Coope has a well-preserved façade and an interior in 'modern' basic style. Popular with young trendies (so we fitted in really well!) the Camel offered beers from Sambrook and Crouch Vale. A Bob Dylan compilation on the pub pa made the Editor feel at home. Back on the 8 bus for a shorter trip to the top of Brick Lane for the Mason & Taylor in Bethnal Green Road. This former pizza parlour has been a pub for about a year and was even more crammed with YTs than the Camel. We squeezed in at a table and enjoyed

beers from Redwillow (Macclesfield) and Great Heck (North Yorks); as SPBW members we enjoyed a small discount. The traditional last pub is the Pride of Spitalfields in Heneage Street off Brick Lane which, as ever, offered Crouch Vale Brewers Gold, Doom Bar and Fullers London Pride and ESB at competitive prices in a lively atmosphere. Most of us came back after our tasty Asian nosh round the corner.

### ***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 – especially now that postage rates are being hiked in a big way. Beware that PiH is a substantial document (around 5MB) 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.

### ***QR EXPLAINED***

The strange square design below is the SPBW's QR code. QR is a new way of advertising anything, especially a website. It is like the bar codes seen on all products these days.

If you have a newer reader (free to download the app and point the image. The app looks for to line up the image, decodes the image. You and go directly to our This is instant It also means people can without having to write



phone and the QR and install) you just open phone camera at the QR the three corner squares then instantly reads and can then read the text website.

be printed on anything (such as T-shirts with QR images instead of the usual advertising text). We intend to use it in PiH and all publicity material.

advertising of the SPBW. go directly to our website down the address. It can

### ***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.

## ***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.*

*Missing from the list below is Coate branch, which has been effectively defunct for at least a year or so. Formed in 1975, Coate was once one of four SPBW branches in the Devizes area, now all history.*

**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 **Duchess of Cambridge**, 320 Goldhawk Road, London W6 0XF. Contact John Rooth (see page 2).

**CENTRAL LONDON:** Meetings usually 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 [secretary@spbw.org](mailto:secretary@spbw.org). 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 a pint), then to Hops, Prince Albert Street, Crewe – all real ales £2 a pint for Camra members. Contact Colin Donald 01270 623376 email [colinsdonald@sky.com](mailto:colinsdonald@sky.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 on 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 handpumps. Occasionally the Tuesday Bell (JDW), Lisburn, after 8pm on a Saturday. Contact Mark Hutchinson for details of meetings and events:

[marksalehousecom@hotmail.com](mailto:marksalehousecom@hotmail.com)

**RACS:** The Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth meets last Wednesday of each month in various pubs in Sawbridgeworth. 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, Cumbria, Cheshire and Shropshire, or wherever we happen to be.

**WANTZ:** Meetings are held third Monday of the month at the **Old Fountain**, 3 Baldwin Street (off City Road), London EC1V 9NU, starting at around 7.30 pm. Contact Roger Jacobson (see page 2).

**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!*



## **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!

## ***BRANCHES IN ACTION***

In March **Campden Hill** contested the annual Keith Hudson darts competition. This year saw a new name on the trophy, that of Ian McDonald, successful after many near misses in the past. This was at the Horseshoe, Clerkenwell, where the Sambrooks and Sharps Cornish Coaster were in good condition.

In April we met at Defectors Weld in Shepherds Bush where Purity Ubu was very good. From here we went on to the Flamingo Ethiopian restaurant in Goldhawk Road. Of the 3 “Ethiopian beers” on the menu, one wasn’t available, one was South African, so we had the St Georges, a pleasant 4.6% Ethiopian lager type beer. The traditional foods, meat, fish or veggie, are called Wot, Tibs and Alichia and are usually quite spicy. You do not get cutlery, instead eating the stew and mince type foods with your fingers using the traditional fermented unleavened bread called Injera. The service was flaky, the wine arriving half way through the main course after the starters. The waitress omitted her pad when taking the orders so some confusion arose, and it turned out that some dishes were unavailable only at the time they were due to be served, rather than when ordered. To add to the fun the basement was a building site, but all in all we enjoyed the experience. The cost was £23 per head about £10 drinks £13 food so quite good value. Hugh won the branch eater award for eating his own and Adrian’s meal.

On 21 May we meet at the Bricklayers in Putney (7.00).

**Cheshire** and **Special** branches got together in April to celebrate Colin’s birthday in Birmingham (well, it’s sort of halfway and rail fares from London are dirt cheap). We met up at the Pub Du Vin, close to Snow Hill station. Basically a hotel cellar bar, this is rambling sort of place with a central bar. Three beers on offer, from Purity, Kinver and Silhill breweries; the last of these was a new one on me but it’s very local, being based in Solihull. We left here in time for a heavy shower as we made our way to the bust stop. The no 7 took us to Aston High Street and the wonderful Bartons Arms. This is one of the architectural wonders of the pub world, with some impressive tile work and stained glass. The pub is now owned by Oakham brewery who have preserved it splendidly. Four Oakham beers were on offer, plus a guest from Titanic, who are, hardly surprisingly, cashing in on a certain 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The BA also has a Thai restaurant, offering a lunch menu at a bargain £5.95, and very tasty it was too (the food not the menu). If you’ve yet to visit the Barton’s Arms, rectify this sad omission at the earliest opportunity.

Heading back into the city centre our final destination was the Post Office Vaults in New Street. This is a lively cellar bar which has had numerous past incarnations but opened in its present form in December 2011. It’s part owned by Nigel Barker, who also runs the nearby Wellington, a renowned ale house – he’s an SPBW member as well! The POV has 8 beers on tap; I tried selections from Salopian, Vale, Milestone and Nutbrook breweries and all were in good condition. There’s also a very wide range of bottles beers from abroad It was quite busy in early evening, being a fairly compact place, but it’s definitely worth visiting, especially if you’re travelling via New Street station.

Special Branch's annual gathering afloat is rapidly approaching, on the Kennet & Avon Canal again, this time heading for Bristol via Bath.

The **Common and Aldbrickham** branch convened in London on 3 March for the 5<sup>th</sup> annual memorial pub crawl, celebrating founding member and branch guru, Peter Smith (1949-2007). The original idea was a Northern Line crawl but this was amended when it turned out that TfL were "working on the line". The meeting point was intended to be the Euston Tap by Euston Station but they were having their lines "deep-cleaned" and instead we repaired to the nearby Bree Louise, where others found their way. The party comprised Andrew Church, John Dearing, Paul Forrest and John Granville from the branch with Chairman Mike Hall, Bill English and Roger Jacobson also happily joining the crawlers. From the Bree, it was back to the Euston Tap, and from there we visited the Calthorpe Arms, Craft Beer Company, Harp and, somewhat diminished in number, the Royal Oak in Southwark. Rumour has it that Mike Hall, who was the last to join the party (or more correctly the party joined him at the Calthorpe!) was also the last to leave the Royal Oak.

Happily our Branch Pub of the Year, the Blaggrave in Reading has reopened and although the ambience and beer range is a little different the new management have started serving local brews from the Loddon and Andwell breweries, so it is probably still worth a visit if you are passing through Thomas Hardy's Aldbrickham.

**Norfolk Bears** hit London on Wednesday 6 June for a pub tour from Liverpool Street to Fleet Street and back. The following day the monthly meeting will be held at the Fat Cat & Canary (formerly Mustard Pot) in Thorpe Road, now under the same ownership as the Fat Cat.

**Northern Ireland's** Chairman, Mark, had a bad accident which left his arm in a sling and the threat of the arm bone being pinned under surgery. He has been unable to be present on the normal nights for casual branch meetings but he does hope to be propping up the bar again soon. If anyone wishes to meet up they just need to email him.

**RACS** continues to visit different pubs in Sawbridgeworth for their monthly meetings. It has proved very successful and we are spreading the real ale message, since the landlords are making an effort to have a good supply on hand for us. May sees the AGM and bookings are being taken for a trip to Ascot in October for a day of racing and a beer festival.

**Wantz** branch's latest pub tour was in the East End, specifically Leyton and Walthamstow. We started at the William IV on Leyton High Road, home of Brodie's brewery. This is a big old traditional boozier which offered about 8 beers from the micro-plant at the back, all at £1.99 a pint. After this we stopped at the Drum on Lea Bridge Road, surely one of Wetherspoon's smaller (and worst designed!) pubs, then took the bus up Hoe Street to the Olde Rose & Crown. This is a large, sprawling traditional pub with friendly service and 5 or 6 ales on offer (I tried Red Squirrel London Porter and Kelham Island Riders on the Storm). Finally we visited a couple in the area known as Walthamstow village – the old part of town. Both the Nags Head and the Village are worth looking in at, the former having the larger range of

beers. In the same part of town, a few weeks earlier, a couple of us spent a happy couple of hours at the beer festival at Leyton Orient Supporters Club. The team may be third tier but the bar here is definitely Premier League. Usually about 6 beers are on offer but for the festival some 20 or so were available and all those I tried were in prime condition. London beer tickers were out in force!

Future events include Thai and German meals, a visit to East London Brewing and possibly a day trip to Leicester.



*William IV, Leyton – good value home-brewed ales*

## **OUT OF THE WOOD**

It may be premature to say that beer from the wooden cask is making a comeback. However, following news of Chiltern brewery's enterprise (see last issue), we learn that Ridgeside brewery in Leeds, is also dabbling in beers from the wood. Ridgeside, which began operations in June 2010, showcased no less than 6 beers in the wood at the Junction, Carlton Street, Carshalton at the end of March, with a talk from master cooper Alistair Simm from Wadworth as a bonus. Neil Ridgeley, brewer at Ridgeside, has bought 20 11-gallon wooden casks from Wadworth.

More Ridgeside from the wood was to be had at the first North Leeds Charity Beer Festival at St Aidan's Church at the end of the month, the cask being sponsored by our own West Riding branch.

I ought to stress, for those who don't know, that the SPBW is no longer primarily concerned about wooden casks for beer – it's the contents not the container we care about – but of course we do appreciate it and support it as much as we can.

## ***FROM THE ARCHIVES***

Issue 2 of what is now PiH appeared in May 1982, on schedule. It was printed on the SPBW's very own duplicator, our first venture into modern technology! A report of the recent NEC AGM reveals that Sue Hart had been elected for the first time and had volunteered to look after national membership. I note that meetings were being held in the Viaduct Tavern on Newgate Street, which had the advantage of staying open until 11.00, unlike Ye Olde Watling, the usual HQ, which closed too early to allow meetings to be completed. The 3rd London Pub of the Year award had been won by the Royal Oak in Romford, then home to Wantz branch. Wantz has survived, unlike the Royal Oak which was demolished a few years later to make way for a ring road. We were on the brink of the first ever National Weekend, the brainchild of Nick Martin, who organised a visit to Devizes and district over the late May bank holiday. These weekends have been held every year (bar one) since then.

The one substantial article in this issue concerned a Wantz branch visit to Maldon, where Ridleys and Greene King provided most of the refreshments. Finally, someone calling him/herself 'Slop tray' contributed a brief piece about the drinking of beer in quarts, which seems to have been the standard drinking measure up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

10 years later the front cover depicted the Stagg Inn at Titley, Herefordshire. This remote country pub was for many years run by the late Frank Bingham who paid an annual affiliation fee so he could be Titley branch. In recent years the Stagg has made a reputation as a gastro-pub, not quite as it was in Frank's day! I reported the demise of Ind Coope brewery in Romford, my home town during my formative years. Just as Romford's best pub became a road, this historic brewery is now a shopping centre; I'd rather drink beer than shop or drive personally.

Ten years on and a report of the 2002 NEC AGM reveals that John Rooth had been elected as Secretary, a post he still fills with aplomb. The meeting had been held at the Market Porter in Borough Market which still offers a wide range of beers from all parts. Much further afield, the late Ronald Kodlick of Chesapeake Bay branch reported on the latest SPBW Real Ale Challenge. 26 beers from 20 breweries – mostly US micros but also Coniston Bluebird and Brakspears Best. The most popular was Dogfish Head's 90 Minute Man IPA, 'a well-balanced very big ale at 9% abv'. Not sure how well-balanced you'd be after a few of them! Andy Whitley had been on his travels as usual, this time across the water to Leuven in Belgium. This is the home town of Stella Artois but needless to say, better examples of Belgian brewing were on offer. Andy & co also fitted in visits to Antwerp and Ghent over a long weekend.



## **A LEEDS TREBLE**

### *Andy's Roving Report*

The **East of Arcadia** opened in November 2010 and forms part of the ground floor of a modern apartment block on the junction of Meanwood Road and Monk Bridge Road in the northern Leeds suburb of Meanwood. It's a quite sizeable place, with large plate glass windows giving a view of the traffic passing by outside; the general design of the interior seems to have a slightly art deco feel to it, which might have something to do with the curved walls and ceiling. While there's a fair amount of space around the bar counter - immediately in front of you as you enter - there's also substantial seating that was all taken up when we called in during the evening of the last Saturday in March. Polished floor boards bedeck the bar area, whilst any persons ensconced at the tables can rest their tootsies on carpet. I could see a number of people were dining and noticed one customer pouring a bottle of Delirium Tremens into his glass; as it was only 8.00 o'clock I felt he was imbibing well but not wisely. Which brings us to the beer; I think there were 8 cask beers available, the cheapest being Ilkley Brewery's Mary Jane, a 3.5% hoppy bitter that cost £2.68 and was in extremely good form. This being part of Market Town Taverns' extensive estate, you can always be sure that there'll be some interesting cask ales available, along with the eclectic selection of the foreign bottled variety.

Up until 2007, there was a pub called the "Beckett's Arms" where the main apartment block now is. Whilst checking the Leodis web site for any information on this pub, I came across a photograph from the 10th of January 1939, which shows two Beckett's Arms! The older and much smaller Beckett's, which had previously been known as the "Dusty Miller", stood where the East of Arcadia now is and closed later in 1939 when its far larger replacement opened. Both were owned by John Smiths brewery and on the photograph you can make out the Magnet Ales pub sign outside the old hostelry. The area has gone rather upmarket since the newer "Beckett's Arms" was demolished and the nearby supermarket is, needless to say, a Waitrose. I'd say the East of Arcadia is certainly worth calling in at when you are hereabouts. As for the name, the E o A is east of its sister pub, the "Arcadia" at Headingley, about a mile away.

Opening hours 11 - 11 daily; canine friendly. Check out Market Town Tavern's website [www.markettowntaverns.co.uk](http://www.markettowntaverns.co.uk) for more details.

**EAST OF ARCADIA, 607 Meanwood Road, LS6 4HQ, 0113 2755488.**

If you exit the East of Arcadia and manage to get across the road in one piece, just follow the row of shops up to the left and you come to the **Alfred Bar** after about a minute. Keep your eyes skinned though for you may walk past what must be one of the smallest pubs or bars for miles around. I've actually seen bigger front rooms and I have been informed that the premises, which resemble a hut from outside, were once used as a cafe. Howbeit, the

owners of the "North Bar" in Leeds, purchased the property which opened in its present guise early in 2011.

The **Alfred** was pretty much jammed to the gills the first evening that I called here, but we managed nonetheless to squeeze up to the bar, where there were 3 cask beers available. These included Kirkstall Pale Ale, a 4% beer that was served in pint glasses with handles; a bit of a rarity in these parts. The quality was definitely superior and it was easy to fathom out why so many people were in such a small room. Alongside the cask offerings are some fonts and there's also an interesting variety in the foreign bottled line. Food in the shape of cheese (or meat) and bread platters is available and I note that the **Alfred** was due to host a festival of Belgian beers near the end of April.

Decor here is eccentric; there's dozens of dimly lit lights, the lampshades for which all seem to date from the 60s and 70s - a garish collection indeed and I'd estimate that the beams date from the same period too. They've managed to fit a surprising number of tables and chairs in for the weak and weary and I understand from reading an on-line review of this hostelry that dogs are welcome. If correct, I'd advise something about the size of a muscular mouse as space is at a premium, especially on an evening.

As for the name, it apparently comes from the fact that the **Alfred** is north, north west of its parent pub, the "North Bar"; ergo, North By Northwest = Alfred as in Hitchcock. I don't make these things up incidentally.

My opinion - call in for a pint or two and treat yourself. Opening times are Mon to Fri 5 -11; Saturday 1 -11 and Sunday 1 -10; hours may be extended on Bank holiday periods. See [www.northbar.com](http://www.northbar.com) for info on the **Alfred** and the other pubs in the group.

**ALFRED BAR, 6 Stonegate Road, Leeds LS6 4HY, tel: 0113 2780779.**

The **Abbey Inn's** a pub that lots of people have heard of, but few have a clue how to get to it. Standing between the Leeds/Liverpool canal and the river Aire (plus a railway line), the **Abbey Inn** is situated in a valley that goes up to Bramley on the southern side and to New Road Side (A65) to the north. At the time of writing, vehicular access is only possible via Leeds and Bradford Road, Bramley, then down Pollard Lane, though the walk from New Road Side, down Newlay Lane to the old bridge over the river and then to Pollard Lane and the **Abbey Inn** doesn't take long. Anyone using public transport would be advised to take the latter route as the walk from the Bramley end is rather lengthier.

From what I can gather, the pub was originally a farmhouse, built sometime in the 1700s and the first record of it as an inn is in 1826, when one Joseph Myers was the innkeeper. During the 19th century, industrialisation spread into the area, with a dye works being built close by. This was owned by a family called Whitaker who, in 1899, purchased the **Abbey Inn** allegedly in an attempt to control the drinking habits of their workforce. They sold it to the Bradford Dyers Association, who in turn sold it to Richard Whitaker & Sons, the Halifax brewers in 1948. Any relation to the dye works owners? Whitbreads took over Whitaker's Brewery in 1968 and closed it the next year.

Back to the present day though; the pub has been opened out a bit at some point, with the bar counter being more or less central to the layout, though you can see what used to be a separate room to the right. Round to the left is a raised games area which used to be a room that doubled up as a mortuary, holding the bodies of those unfortunates who had, too late, been fished out of the canal or river; I have read that this usage continued into the 1950s. There's a number of ghost stories attached to the place, needless to say.

I've been there on a Tuesday night and there was a decent number of folk there (most city centre pubs would have been almost empty) and they had some good beers to choose between. Out of 6 handpumps, 4 were operating that evening, dispensing two Abbeydale beers - Moonshine and Absolution, alongside Kirkstall Black Band Porter and Leeds Midnight Bell. I enjoyed a pint of the Absolution, which was pretty much in the way of a nightcap. The **Abbey Inn** has won a good number of awards in the past, including one for being the CAMRA Community Pub of the Year, 2008/09. There's live music on Saturday nights and the pub hosts its own music and beer festivals.

Opening hours are Mon-Sat 12-11 and Sunday 12-10.30. The pub website is [www.theabbey-inn.co.uk](http://www.theabbey-inn.co.uk) or see their facebook page.

**ABBEY INN, 99 Pollard Lane, Newlay, Leeds LS13 1EQ; tel; 0113 2581248.**

### ***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.

Also, when events and news are published on the website you can be notified direct to your email by signing up for a FREE notification service on the news page. Go to: <http://spbw.com/news.html> and go to the 'Monitor changes' box in the bottom left corner.

### ***PINTS IN PUBS***

We have several 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.

Some back issues of ***Pint in Hand*** are available:- numbers 46; 49; 86-121. 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.

## ***YORK NAMED PUB CHALLENGE***

Ray & Dot Goodearl, members of Central London branch, also ardent fans of York City Football Club, have added a little spice to their dose of Conference football that has been dished up since relegation in 2004 (hoping this will be the last and a welcome return to the Football League, on current form very possible)

We have decided to visit every public house in the UK that contains the word 'York' in the its title, not just 'Duke of', but any hostelry such as York Arms, Yorkshire Grey, Squire York etc. Some internet research has thrown up 103 in total throughout the country. On our visits they have noted ales available, photo of pub sign, and reception received. We are combining their research with football matches and holiday locations, stretching from Exmouth, (York Arms), to Whitby (Duke of York), Wrexham, (Squire York) to Saffron Walden (Duke of York). Prior to the Tony Littler Trophy on 18 April, we called at two other pubs in Clerkenwell, the Yorkshire Grey in Grays Inn Road and the Duke of York in Roger Street.



*The Author in action*

The most recent visit was on return from football at Braintree on 21 April, (York won and ensured their place in the play offs) to the newly re-opened (only 5 days previous), Duke of York at Ganwick Corner, Barnet, just a few yards off junction 25 of the M25. A pleasant surprise with 5 real ales on offer, a freehouse, foody pub, with obvious evidence of a lot of money spent on newly re-furbishing, a risk considering how isolated it is from walk in and passing trade, but very well worth a visit.

Thirty one visited so far, about another 70 plus to go, including pubs in, Bexhill on Sea, Bolton, Churchinford (Somerset), Derby, Norwich, and Manchester to name but a few.

Any hidden gems that readers know of that may fall into this category, suggestions please to the **Editor** who will pass them on. Thank you.

*Ray Goodearl*

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