

SOCIETY for the PRESERVATION of BEERS from the WOOD

(founded 1963)

The original beer consumer organisation

PINT in HAND

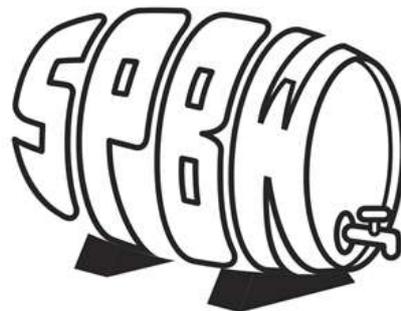
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The Dead Poet's Inn, Holbrook, Derbyshire – very much alive (see page 15)

Founded 1963



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 May 2014 issue should reach the Editor by **25 April**.
- The Editor or the National Executive Committee of SPBW does not necessarily share opinions expressed in *Pint in Hand*.

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Editorial address

Roger Jacobson, 2 Elizabeth House, St Leonards Street, London E3 3BX; email editor@spbw.com; Tel 020 8980 9093 or 07906 400056 (m)

Membership Secretary

Roger West, Four Winds, 70 Chalfont Road, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 2QP; email membership@spbw.com

Branch Liaison and Products

Bill English, email beeel@myway.com; tel 07910 657423

General Secretary

John Rooth, 20A Station Parade, Northolt Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 8HB; email john.rooth@gfk.com Tel: 07950 770921 [m]

National Chairman

Alasdair Boyd (acting)

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

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

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 or visit our website.



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OPENING TIME

Here I am back on page 3 having relegated myself to a dusty corner of PiH for the last couple of issues to make way for more weighty issues.

As the SPBW goes into its 51st year we can look back and say that we celebrated our Golden Jubilee year in pretty fine style with a series of events which brought together members in some good pubs, breweries and beer festivals. We don't want to let this impetus slip; we're trying to get another programme of events together for the coming year – watch out for details in these pages and the usual e-media. Many of these events tend to be in the London area, largely due to the large concentration of members there. But we have plenty of members around the UK, so any non-London people who want to organise events, please go ahead.

One curious, and probably coincidental, aspect of our 50th year is the slowly but ever-growing number of breweries using wooden casks either for maturation or dispense. Garry Wiles has been doing great work on the SPBW's behalf to pull together as many details of this as possible and his report to date can be found on pages 7 – 9 of this issue.

I think I should emphasise at this point that the SPBW is primarily interested in the beer, rather than the cask, and has taken this stance since the late 1960s. However, we decided that, not least due to our name, we should try to become a centre of expertise where wood was concerned, and to give support and encouragement to brewers and publicans who produce and serve beers from the wood. But, ultimately, it's what the beer tastes like that matters.

You may have noticed that the last issue of PiH looked a little bit different (and I think better) than its predecessors. This is because we are now using a new printer. Since 2006 PiH was printed at Wiltshire Council, courtesy of former NEC Chairman Chris Callow. After the Council saw fit to dispense with Chris's services last year, we were deprived of this source of fairly cheap printing. So we've had to go to a commercial printer, which inevitably costs a bit more. It also means that I have to do the donkey work of stuffing envelopes and the like which Chris was previously lumbered with! Anyway, we're very grateful to Chris for all his efforts over the years.

You'll see from the front cover that we have a new logo. We still have plenty of stock with the 50th Anniversary logo so, if you're lacking any of our quality merchandise, check out the back page and get your orders in!

Have a good year and make sure you get along to SPBW events if you can – I hope to see you there.

RJ

Articles on beer/pub related issues for Pint in Hand are always welcome! 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.

Some back issues of **Pint in Hand** are available:- numbers 46; 49; 86-114; 116-128. These can be obtained from the Editor (address on page 2) in return for 15 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.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The SPBW NEC 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 branch representatives.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2014 AGM of the NEC will be held on **Monday 10 March** at the **Horseshoe**, 24 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AG, in the upstairs function room. The meeting will start at 7pm. All SPBW members are invited to attend the meeting, which should be fairly brief and allow plenty of social opportunities afterwards. A buffet will be provided. We usually hold a raffle during the meeting and we'll be grateful to anyone who can donate a prize.

The Horseshoe is a new venue for us and is in a turning off Clerkenwell Green (the Crown Tavern is on the corner) between Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road. Farringdon station (District, Circle and Hammersmith & City lines and national rail) is a quarter of a mile away. Buses 55 and 243 run along Clerkenwell Road and the 63 along Farringdon Road. The pub serves 4 handpumped beers including Sharp's Cornish Coaster and Harvey's Best. The function room is quite spacious so there should be plenty room for everyone to sit in comfort.

If you wish to volunteer for a post on the NEC, please let John Rooth know.

BEER & CURRY

No need to idle away a Sunday when you can visit a selection of East London's best pub and wash your beer down with a Brick Lane curry at the end? Our next B & C is on Sunday 2 March. Meet at the award-winning Eleanor Arms from noon to 1 o'clock for some excellent Shepherd Neame beers. Then take the 8 bus heading west, stopping off at the Camel, Old George, Well & Bucket and Pride of Spitalfields. It would help if you could let John Rooth know if you plan to come along; he can provide more details of the venues en route.

A pub walk in the Southwark area was planned for 6 February, around the time this issue is expected to be published.

NATIONAL WEEKEND 2014

This year's National Weekend is still at the early planning stage but it may well be based in Huddersfield from 14 – 16 November; West Riding branch has kindly offered to host the event. Look out for details in the May PiH. An account of the 2013 NW can be found at page 14.

LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR

The Eleanor Arms was fairly packed on the evening of 27 January when we presented our prestigious award to Frankie and Lesley. Quite a few SPBW members made their way to bustling Bow to join the merry throng. They were rewarded with some fine beer – Pitfield London Porter, from the wood, £3 a pint, being a bonus – and a superb buffet. Our award was very much appreciated by Frankie & co and their regular customers. Look out for our certificate when you call in – which I strongly suggest you do!

And so to the next award – we'll be commissioning nominations in the next issue of PiH so be ready with your favourite London pub.



Frankie and Lesley at the Eleanor Arms (photo by Bill English)

OUT AND ABOUT

We hope to be represented at the Ealing Beer Festival from 2 – 5 July. However, we do need people to man the stall and the more helpers there are, the easier it is for everyone. Please contact John Rooth if you want to volunteer to help out.

SPBW ONLINE

The SPBW **Members Forum** is www.spbw.com/bb. The Bulletin Board is intended as a way for members to exchange information. You can also join SPBW on **Facebook** at www.facebook.com. Our online shop can be found on the Products page on our website; just follow the links. We are aware people change emails for various reasons and we would like everyone to log on to the Forum and make sure their details are up to date - otherwise they will miss out on information mailed out by the SPBW.

2013

Our Golden Jubilee celebration year went off very well; all our events were well supported, so thanks to all those of you who came along and, of course, to the various organisers. The last two events were both in December.

The **Pig's Ear Festival** featured several beers from wooden casks, mostly by XT, but a 7.2% SPBW Jubilee ale was provided by Cambridge Moonshine. 20 or so SPBW members came along on the Wednesday evening for some convivial drinking. Our thanks to East London & City Camra branch for showcasing the SPBW.

The **50th Anniversary Dinner** on 6 December was fully subscribed and the 32 members present enjoyed a hearty and good quality feed, washed down with some fine beers (including an 'oak-aged' Adnams Christmas Ale). Some of the more veteran members gave some entertaining reminiscences and the whole evening went off very well.

MIKE HALL MEMORIAL PUB CRAWL

Mike's 67th birthday would have been 25 November 2013 and that evening some 15 members got together to commemorate him in a selection of pubs in his 'native' west London. Starting point was the ***Moon Under Water*** in Hounslow, a typical Wetherspoon pub offering a few autumn and winter ales. Next stop was the excellent ***Red Lion***, Isleworth (down Linkfield Road, behind the rail station). This is a traditional, large community pub with an old-style public bar. Monday is jazz night here and an excellent band were performing – shame we had to move on (the pub also has its own theatre group and a weekly quiz). The Red Lion offers 8 or 9 beers from a variety of breweries, friendly service and is highly recommended. Another bus journey took us to Brentford and the ***Magpie & Crown*** in the High Street. The future of this genuine free house was in doubt a few years back but all is well now. Indeed, the beer range seems to have been expanded; breweries such as Marble and Thornbridge were represented on our visit. Our final destination was the ***Express*** in Kew Bridge Road. This was the first ever SPBW London Pub of the Year back in 1980 and I doubt that it's changed much since then. If you go in the bar to the left of the entrance look out for the SPBW mirror behind the door. As well as the staples of Bass and Young's ordinary, Twickenham Naked Ladies was available – until it was found to be 'past it' – happily the duff pints were changed with no problems. Bill English said a few words about Mike by way of tribute and we all raised our glasses to Mike's memory to round off an enjoyable evening. Thanks to Aidan Kerrigan for organising.

RJ

SEASONS GREETINGS

For many years the NEC has sent Christmas cards to various breweries and pubs. This Christmas we received cards from the Directors of JW Lees and Miles Jenner of Harvey's, to whom extra good wishes.

THE WOOD BEER GUIDE

Garry Wiles took on the role of SPBW national wood liaison officer in October 2012 with a basic remit to investigate and maintain a list of breweries and pubs that handle beer from the wood, and obtain information about the history of wooden casks they use. It's been an interesting first year (and a bit), and there are definite signs of an increasing interest in supplying and selling beers from the wood, especially in recent months. Below is a summary of the most significant information obtained, which we hope you will find of interest.

Breweries selling/supplying beers from the wood

Cambridge Moonshine

In February 2012 brewed for Pig's Ear beer festival a 10% abv stout called Limitless Abundance; yeast used for the beer was cultured from red wine yeast supplied by Chilford Hall winery based in Linton, Cambridgeshire. Once the beer had completed its fermentation it was racked into oak casks and allowed to mature at a slow pace allowing it to take on the oak tannins and the flavours that have been implanted in the wood from its previous use. The beer was also on sale in oak at the 2013 Harwich and Dovercourt beer festival, the Wenlock Arms and the Cambridge Winter ale festival. The casks were produced by Jonathan Manby of Theakston's brewery. They use six firkins and two pins and for each of the last four years always produced something different to put in them to educate the public about their brewing history.

At the 2013 Pig's Ear Beer festival, produced a beer called 50th Anniversary Ale @ 7.2% abv in oak casks and 330ml bottles. Further wooden brews planned in 2014.

Chiltern

In 2012 the brewery launched what they thought was a UK first. They commissioned England's only Master Cooper, Alastair Simms, to make some beautifully crafted firkins from puncheons from the Balgray bottling plant in Ayrshire which were between 60 and 100 years old. The heads were made from new English oak and the two pins were made from new oak from Wadworth's and Young's of London. Their winter seasonal favourite draught, 300's Old Ale, was launched and sold exclusively from these casks.

Since then they have been serving their darker seasonal beers from wooden casks behind the bar at The Farmers' Bar, the brewery tap in Aylesbury. Since then, Copper Beech and 300's Old Ale are being served from the wood. The brewery also has one wooden cask atop the bar which is gravity poured and this is changed on a weekly basis. They only put their darker beers into the wooden casks as the lighter beers can be affected too much in terms of flavour and colour.

Grain

They have 10 oak casks bought from a closed cider producer near Colchester. Each is named after a famous dog. From time to time they put their Blackwood Stout or Porter into oak and sell it from their pub, the Plough, St Benedicts Street, Norwich. 'Scooby Doo' has been in the cool room

at the brewery for almost 2 years now, containing Blackwood Stout 5%. They were thinking of cracking it open at Christmas.

Ironbridge

For more than a year they have been using oak casks for their special oak aged stout. This is aged in 50 gallon wooden casks in the brewery for a month with a healthy dose of Tennessee Whiskey added. A couple of wooden kilderkins are used for the same purpose. The beer is racked into stainless firkins for transport to pubs. The brewery did consider using wood firkins but for now are going to stick with the current method.

They are considering using some more 50 gallon wooden casks in their pub (The Old Fighting Cocks, Oakengates) and to deliver the beer to the pub in bulk and have it mature in the (almost) hogsheads in the cellar. It will then be drawn from the hogsheads via normal handpull. The kilderkins and hogsheads were purchased from Alastair Simms.

Purple Moose

Six wooden firkins were made by T&R Theakston to use on a delivery waggon. They carried out a delivery by train from behind the brewery to Spooner's Bar on the Ffestiniog Railway as a publicity stunt in October 2012, and now use their wooden casks quite regularly for their Dark Side of the Moose, specifically at Spooner's. They have in mind to see if this outlet would be happy to permanently take Dark Side of the Moose in wooden casks.

Samuel Smith

Old Brewery bitter is still reported as being served from wooden casks.

TR Theakston

The only brewery to employ a full time craft cooper, Jonathan Manby, who is the last apprenticed brewery craft cooper in the country. They sell their famous Old Peculier in wooden casks, and are very proud of this indeed.

Wall's

Commenced brewing in January 2011 at Standard Way, Northallerton. The brewery was one of those listed as supplying beers from wooden casks to the Wood Fest at the Junction, Castleford. The casks they use belong to the Junction so they are unable to supply anyone else.

XT

XT Brewery was established in 2011 in Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire. They brew 9 ales ranging from XT 1 Blond to XT 9 Black Velvet, with typically about 5 beers available at any time. Russ, the owner has confirmed they produce beers in oak casks, which go to interested pubs and festivals. They recently had at least four beers from the wood at the Pig's Ear Beer festival.

Unfortunately there has been one casualty: Isle of Skye brewery no longer produces beers from the wood.

Breweries maturing beers in the wood

Another trend is for breweries maturing, rather than serving, their beers in wood; Hawkshead, Hooded Ram, Ironbridge, Magic Rock, Marston's, Moncada, Traquair House, Wild Beer Co are known to do this.

Pubs selling beers from the wood

A small number of pubs have been reported as selling beers from the wood. They are listed below. This is where members particularly can be of great help, by passing on details of any pubs they visit that are seen to be selling beers from the wood. I can follow up with the pub to find out more.

Bree Louise, 69 Cobourg Street, London, NW1 2HH near London Euston station struck a deal with Wadworth's to have beer in the wood delivered, initially for Cask Ale week (along with from the wood Chiltern). The pub also sported the SPBW logo on the banner outside during Cask Ale Week.

The Junction, Castleford has an annual wood festival. This year it is confirmed as Friday 18th and Saturday 19th April. Ringside beers in wood are a permanent feature, and they also supply beers from other small Yorkshire breweries. Also reported in November as having three Chiltern Brewery beers served from the wood - Beechwood, Chiltern Ale & 300s' Old Ale.

Farmer's Bar at the King's Head, Aylesbury – see report on Chiltern brewery above.

New Inn, Coate, and **the Raven** at Poulshot, both near Devizes serve Wadworth beers straight from the wood.

More information can be found in the 'Breweries producing beers in wood' forum under the 'Wooden places' topic on the SPBW forum.

I hope to be able to let you have regular updates in forthcoming editions of PiH, but meanwhile welcome any news of breweries or pubs doing beers from the wood.

Garry Wiles, Wood Liaison Officer

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 (page 2) know and a bundle of leaflets will be sent. If you can just recruit the odd friend or colleague, this would be ever so helpful as well. Thanks to those of you who have already helped in this way.

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.

MEET the BRANCHES

We have 18 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.

We're delighted to welcome a new branch, North Irish Sea, and basic details are below. Hopefully, we'll hear a lot more about this in future.

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 Crosse Keys, 9 Gracechurch Street, London EC3V 0DR. 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. Website: 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, 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.

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. 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 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

NORFOLKSOAKS (formerly 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; twitter: <https://twitter.com/SPBWN1>

NORTH IRISH SEA: The Isle of Man based branch meets on Friday evenings, usually in the Douglas area, but also has many unofficial visits elsewhere on the island, and from time to time in the coastal areas of the traditional Lancashire boundaries. Contact David Halliwell (07972807934) david.halliwell@manx.net Always happy to meet up with visitors to the IoM.

RACS: The Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth meets last Wednesday of each month in various pubs in Sawbridgeworth. Contact Jan Mead (01279 724356) 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, 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) 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).

* * * * *

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 (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.

BRANCHES IN ACTION

Campden Hill supported the Mike Hall Memorial Crawl (see page 6) at some of the best haunts round his area. For our Not the Christmas meal, also in November, we visited the New Fook Lam Moon Chinese restaurant, which also does some Malaysian speciality food, where we enjoyed a very nice meal. Our aperitif was at the Cambridge which had a number of cask seasonal beers.

Future events include Keith Hudson darts at the Horseshoe on February 17th and a meal on March 17th (both Mondays).

Common & Aldbrickham enjoyed a pre- and post-Christmas social, both at the Bell at Aldworth, one of the members' favourite pubs. The Hop Leaf in Reading has been elected Pub of the Year for 2013 and a presentation will be made soon. The next branch event is the 7th Peter Smith Memorial Pub Crawl on Saturday 8 March, this year visiting Lewes in Sussex. Further details will be posted soon. In the summer we are proposing to have another mini-bus trip visiting country pubs around Reading.

Just after Christmas **Kingston** branch had a pub crawl of the Brentford area including the Magpie & Crown and the Express Tavern with the rarely seen Bass on draught. We have also enjoyed social events combining football and beer at our local clubs (Kingstonian and AFC Wimbledon). There is a pub crawl of Twickenham on the horizon and a visit to one of the regular beer festival at The Hope in Carshalton on Friday 28th February. There will also be the annual visit to the Battersea Beer Festival on 5 March. We have recently received the excellent news that The Antelope in Maple Road in Surbiton is to reopen as the sister pub to the Sussex Arms (Twickenham) with 10 handpumps promised. This will be an excellent addition to the local beer scene.

Norfolksoaks continue to meet at the Fat Cat in Norwich and if I could make any sense of the minutes of their meetings I might be able to report what they're up to.

North Irish Sea branch members had several UK visits, including to The Manchester Winter Ales festival held at the unusual Velodrome venue, with the country's top cyclists whizzing round the track whilst festival goers relaxed and imbibed in the central area. In January there were visits to the quayside pubs in Ramsey on Isle of Man, including the award winning Trafalgar. Thankfully all had survived despite severe tidal flooding in the town. A visit to Fleetwood was being planned for early February, and the branch's first anniversary is in April.

RACS carries on as usual, visiting a different pub each month for our regular meetings. January saw us in the George IV, Knight Street, Sawbridgeworth. In December we had a very successful Christmas gathering in The Olde Bell, Sawbridgeworth, when 25 members were present.

Decisions about visits will be discussed in future meetings. A link up with BMAD makes the transport to beer festivals and breweries much more affordable.

Wantz branch is now in its 40th year, having begun life in November 1974. No doubt we'll have a beer or two to celebrate. There were no branch events in the last couple of months but we're in action twice in February: on the 12th we have a Clapton and Hackney pub walk, starting at the Crooked Billet, close to Clapton station. Two weeks later we have a return visit to Tayyabs, a superb Indian

restaurant in Whitechapel. Quite likely we'll take aperitifs in the nearby White Hart, which now has its own brewery in the cellar. Yet another brewery in our area!

West Riding branch have the usual programme of visits to beers festivals all over the place. Next meeting is at the Duck & Drake, Kirkgate, Leeds on Sunday 23 February starting 12.15.

COLIN CARTER 1963-2013

I am sorry to announce the death of my very good friend Colin Carter who died at the end of October 2013 after a long illness which he faced in his own quiet and stoical way. 23 years ago our lives were thrown together when we began training as nurses in Suffolk and I quickly learned of our mutual love for real ale for which Colin was truly passionate. He had hundreds of books on the subject and was very proud of the fact that he had managed to collect the full set of Good Beer Guides, a feat that he managed to achieve shortly before his untimely death.

In 1994 shortly after qualifying Colin moved to London which became his home for the rest of his days. Originally from Hinckley in Leicestershire ("the big H" as he called it), naturally Colin was a big fan of Everards and looked forward to periodic visits to his family to sample some.



Colin was a very keen supporter of beer festivals (after his death I found the programmes for 210) and in one year he managed to visit 30, beating his own previous record of 26, this despite working full time in a demanding and stressful job as a psychiatric nurse. On one occasion he visited 2 festivals on the same day and had trouble getting home. On leaving the 2nd festival he was so drunk that walking across a bridge, he panicked because he could see the railway station but couldn't work out how to get there! He didn't suffer fools or pretentious people easily but he also had a rather dry sense of humour and this was clearly demonstrated when he was asked to describe the taste of the beer that he was currently drinking. Regardless of the style of the brew, whether it was a golden ale, mild, bitter, stout or porter, his usual answer was that it had "roasty notes with strawberries in the finish." Colin was both an SPBW and CAMRA member for about 20 years and is very sadly missed.

*Somerset Mark (who supplied the photo)
(This also appeared in the Guardian, 4 January)*

DERBY DAYS – THE 2013 NATIONAL WEEKEND

The National Weekend in the SPBW's Golden Jubilee year was the 31st such event and, as usual, attracted some 30 members from around the country. The event was based this year in Derby and, to highlight the heritage factor of our anniversary, the first of our two brewery visits was to one of Britain's best known and longest established breweries, Marstons of Burton upon Trent.

Before the Friday evening brewery tour we had the chance to have a look around this historic brewing town. Although its heyday is long past the aroma of hops still pervades the area – it has nearly as many breweries as Hackney, after all. The longest established of the new wave of small breweries is Burton Bridge (founded 1982) whose 'tap', the ***Burton Bridge Inn*** is some way from the town centre but well worth the walk – a cosy two-room pub with at least 4 BB beers on tap. If you don't fancy the walk, close to the rail station is another excellent BB house, the ***Devonshire Arms***, with a public bar at the front and a larger lounge to the rear and a good selection of their beers. A short step round the corner from here is the ***Coopers Tavern***, our pre-brewery meeting point. Once the Bass brewery tap, this is now part of the enterprising Joules chain. Most of us gathered in the small taproom, which was handy for the assortment of beers served both by handpump and gravity.



And so to Marstons, a notable landmark just north of the Trent & Mersey Canal. The famous Burton Union system is still used here for brewing Pedigree and the Union room (known as the Cathedral of Brewing) contained enough wooden casks to satisfy the most fervent traditionalist. Marstons have been brewing here since 1834 and Pedigree is one of the UK's leading cask ale brands. After the tour we enjoyed a few pints while consuming a tasty pie. To save us a walk back to the station in the rain our hosts summoned a fleet of taxis and we were back in Derby

in plenty of time for a few nightcaps in either the **Alexandra** or the **Brunswick Arms**, the closest pubs to the station and both serving a wide range of ales.

Saturday morning was bright and breezy, just like the party which assembled at Derby bus station, some having breakfasted in one of the city's Wetherspoon pubs first. One absentee was Alasdair Boyd, whose mysterious disappearance in Burton was a talking point for the rest of the weekend – no worries folks, he turned up safe and well back in London. Our coach took us a couple of miles north to the little village of Darley Abbey and our first stop, Derventio brewery. Named after the Roman word for Derby, this has been in operation since 2006 and moved to its present impressive location – in the Grade 1 listed Long Mill - 5 years later. Owner and brewer John Baddock greeted us and began serving beers from the 2 handpumps and a selection of bottles. This is a typical small (6 barrel) plant producing beers for the free trade. Opinions about the quality of the beers varied but there was no doubt about the excellence of the buffet, provided by a local caterer.

Leaving the brewery we embarked on John Rooth's magical mystery tour of north Derbyshire pubs. The first of these was a real gem – the **Dead Poets Inn** in Holbrook. This is a remarkably compact, multi-room pub with a blazing log fire and equally warm welcome. "You're the quietest coach party I've ever known!" remarked the landlord as we selected our beer from an enterprising range. A few of the more mainstream ales were listed as 'from the wood' but this turned out to mean simply direct from the cask. Quite a few local customers arrived but there was still room for us all and it was shame to have to drag ourselves away.

Our second pub was pretty good too – the **Talbot Alehouse** in Ripley, the 'tap' for Amber brewery. A large open-plan pub effectively split in to three drinking areas by the long bar counter, this offers the full range of Amber beers, all of which were excellent. If you want to try these without excessive consumption, the pub offers 3 thirds for the price of a pint with a bowl of gourmet peanuts on the side. Bar billiards and table skittles are available by way of amusement.

Dark and had set in by the time we left the pub and our coach battled its way further north towards Matlock. The driver gave up his attempts to take us to the next pub as he didn't fancy negotiating a narrow unlit lane with potentially no means of turning round. So we had to pile out and take our chances; so we found the **Barley Mow** at Bonsall. This turned out to be a fairly small, one-bar pub and our sudden arrival *en masse* caused no little chaos for some time. Once we all got served and settled, all was well. There was a good selection of mostly local ales, the locals – and most of all the young couple running the pub – were friendly so our all too short stay turned out to be most enjoyable. Live music was on the agenda for later that evening and I only hope it was a fairly small ensemble.

We now headed back towards Derby and our next two pubs were in closely neighbouring villages. The **Holly Bush Inn** at Makeney is a 17th century inn which seemed to comprise two large separate bars with a small snug tucked in between. It was certainly very busy, partly due to the wide range of beers on offer (sorry, I wasn't taking notes and I'm writing this two months after the event!). Just a few minutes' walk down the hill is the **King William IV** at Milford, a one-bar house with a couple of mainstream beers alongside two guests from small breweries. This

was our last call of the tour but, once back in Derby there was still time to abuse our livers with a pint or two more to round off a highly pleasant day. Sunday's entertainment consisted of a tour of some of Derby's many excellent pubs, for which we were joined by coachload of West Riding branch members. Derby is famed as having of the UK's best selections of pubs and widest choices of beers. I could easily fill a whole issue of PiH with details of all these but suffice to say that most of these pubs are in a fairly small area so you're likely to wear out your drinking arm before your feet should you set out on a tour. A visit here is highly recommended and if you are planning to come, contact Derby native John Rooth for further guidance. John organised the Weekend, so this is a good time to thank him for his efforts.

RJ



The Alexandra and the Brunswick – two of Derby's finest

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The February 1984 issue of PiH was a fairly slim volume (8 A4 pages) and the Editorial bemoaned the lack of contributions. Almost a full page was devoted to Ponds branch and the delights of pubs in Carshalton. At the time it was noted that “the Hope, West Street.... is believed to have the gassiest beer in the area.” I’m happy to report that the Hope these days is an excellent free house serving a selection of definitely gas-free beers. Mind you, real ale was no guarantee of quality beer in those days. Woolwich branch ‘enjoyed’ a “disastrous Christmas drinks evening at the local home brew pub, the Queen Victoria in Woolwich. The beer was so bad it drove half the party down the road....leaving the rest unable to escape from the guvnor’s generous offer of free beer.”

In this section of the last PiH I made passing reference to legendary publican Peter Mann. By coincidence PiH 9 contained a letter from Peter, who was about to leave the Windmill in London EC2, although he was still looking for a new pub. Peter had run Ye Olde Watling for 3 years and also listed the Magpie & Stump, and Bricklayers Arms as other London pubs under his management. He was much appreciative of SPBW’s St George branch, “without whom I might well be a stone lighter.” From rather further afield was a piece about the newly-formed Australian Beer Society. At the time it might well have been thought that there was hardly any beer down under worth forming a society about and it did seem that the ABS was mostly concerned with brewery history and collectors rather than the, ahem, ‘amber nectar.’ These days you can drink some decent beers down under as the ‘micro/craft’ beer movement is well represented there.

Swiftly moving on 10 years, PiH 49 featured the Jolly Roger Brewery Tap in Worcester on the front cover. People involved with the brewery had formed the Society’s Faithful City branch which operated for a few years in the 1990s. The brewery closed in about 1996 after 14 years in operation. The centre pages were taken up by the NEC annual accounts, fully audited! Otherwise this was another issue of modest proportions, the only substantial articles coming from Yorkshire: Andy’s account of a visit to Scarborough, home of the former North Riding branch, whose report of a trip to Marston Moor brewery was the other.

Andy’s article for the ‘January 2004’ issue (a cunning disguise for the February issue) was in two parts: one covering pubs in Northern Ireland, the other featuring a couple of Lakeland inns, notably the Wasdale Head Inn, which was depicted on the front cover. Andy described this as “surely England’s most remote brewpub” although since then the Great Gable brewery has relocated. The public bar was then (and may well still be) named after Will Ritson, the inn’s first landlord and the first winner of ‘the World’s Biggest Liar’ contest. Or so he claimed.

Elsewhere we note that National Membership rates had been raised to the current level and that Bill English had taken over as Branch Liaison Officer. This issue also contained the second part of an article by Anthony Redman of Innis & Gunn brewery about the use of wooden casks for wine and whisky maturation. I & G had donated some bottles of their beer and I note that I won a couple at the raffle at the 40th Anniversary Dinner. There is some justice in this world!

BRAND NEW PUBS OF YORK

Andy's Roving Report

The Hop in York is the most northerly bit of Ossett brewery's estate and opened its doors late last year in a building that had been occupied by businesses as diverse as an Italian restaurant (recently) and a fish curers and smoke house (years back). A great deal of money has obviously been spent on creating the effect of a latter day gin palace. There's some nice diagonal floor tiling and to your left there's still some coloured wall tiles in evidence, possibly from when it was a fishmongers; note that the ceiling is painted in the same hues of brown, blue and green. While you are peering upwards, you can hardly fail to see the huge Tiffany style lamp shades over the bar counter. They look worthy of being in an opera house. The bar back is almost gargantuan - of a size rarely seen nowadays and I wonder where the brewery got it from; it even has the traditional clock on the top. Way down at the bottom end of the Hop, you will see, high up, some wonderful looking stained glass bearing its corporate message. This is where the pizzeria is, providing stone baked pizzas which were selling well on my visit.

Cask beers available are from Ossett and their associated pub breweries, plus guests. When we called in these included Hop Studio and Ridgeside. I think I counted 9 hand pumps, so you get a very good choice; the beer is top quality and the staff are informative. It's certainly worth calling in when you can afford to travel to York.

A smart, casual dress code is enforced here, so don't turn up in track suit bottoms and greasy t-shirt. The same goes for football colours.

See Ossett Brewery's website for more info on the Hop, including an excellent photograph of the interior. Opening times: Monday to Sunday: Noon onwards, though opening at 11.00 on race days.

The Hop, 11-12 Fossgate, York YO1 9TA. Tel: 01904 541466

Another hostelry that opened late last year and the first pub belonging to Leeds Brewery outside of that city is the **Duke of York**. The address of King's Square sounds grandiose, but it is a tiny area that lies between the top end of The Shambles and Colliergate; blink and you've walked past it. I can't recall who was in the premises previous to the Brewery taking over, but the building itself has been here a long time, in fact I think it is two houses joined up. From what I could see, the customers have a choice of three different levels to drink on. Looking down to your right upon entering, there's what may be the oldest part of the Duke of York. Should you choose to quaff down here watch your head on the beams! There's acoustic sessions held in this room on Sunday evenings from 7.30 onwards.

On the main level where the bar is, the layout is split up into different areas (not a shoebox by any means) and there's also an upstairs room. Obviously, Leeds Brewery's own products were on sale along with various guest beers and I must say that the Hop Studio's Porter tasted absolutely first class. The décor is interesting as it includes many photographs of HMS Duke of York, plus copies of the old 1950's British Rail travel posters, some of which are superb examples of the artist's craft.

The Duke of York is a very interesting hostelry and the beer is excellent (like the bar service)! One drawback to calling in on a weekend evening though is that you may find it impossible to squeeze in as it attracts a large number of customers.

See the Leeds Brewery website for more details, though if you can find any mention of opening hours then you have had more luck than me.

Duke of York, King's Square, York YO1 8BH. Tel: 01904 676065

JUNCTION BEER FROM THE WOOD FESTIVAL

The Junction, Carlton Street, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 1EE, is holding another beer festival over the Easter weekend, 18 – 21 April. This will be “the biggest selection of wood casked ales in the country”. I expect a good few SPBW members will be there so why not join them?

CLOSING TIME

THE WORKSOP AND RETFORD BREWERY (WRB)

Some time ago, 'Pint in Hand' published a request for information about the WRB, taken over by Tennants in 1958 and demolished in 1962. Thanks for all information which arrived. Visits we also made to archives in both Nottingham and Sheffield, Bassetlaw Museum in Retford, the Dukeries, the National Brewery Centre in Burton-on-Trent and, of course, Worksop itself.

The WRB 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.

After almost four years, publication has finally happened. The almost forgotten story of what was once one of the town's foremost industries tells a story of a brewery that was both typical of many regional, independent breweries, and yet also unique in its creative use of marketing and iconography. The illustrated publication is richly anecdotal and will be of interest to anyone interested in either Worksop and its history, or with a passing interest in beer and brewing. It also provides the historical backdrop for the forthcoming novel, Beer, Balls and the Belgian Mafia.'

The book is currently available on Amazon Kindle for only' £1.57, much less than the price of a pint of beer (unless it's Sam Smiths) -

<http://tinyurl.com/ptakjfm> or <http://www.amazon.co.uk/>

then search using beer Worksop.'

Dave Pickersgill



SPBW PRODUCTS

All the products below carry the SPBW 50th Anniversary logo.

Ties Windsor purple, green, navy blue	£11.50 (£13 inc P & P)
T-shirts XL black, royal blue, jade, red; L black, royal blue, red.	£9 (£14)
Sweatshirts XL black, jade, royal blue, red	£15 (£21.50)
Polo Shirts XL royal blue, red, jade; L jade, royal blue, black, red	£13 (£19.00)
Hats Acrylic knitted, royal blue, red, burgundy	£5 (£7.50)
Baseball Caps black, green)	£7 (£10.70)
Glasses Straight handled pint mugs with etched logo	£8 (£14)
Please contact Patrick Deller if you wish to order a glass – pgadeller@gmail.com	

We also have sweats, polo and t-shirts, hats and caps with the 'old' logo, plus rugby shirts, fleeces, enamel badges and sew-on badges: check the website for details.

You can admire our product range on the SPBW website! And you can buy products through our on-line shop: <http://www.spbw-shop.co.uk/>

- **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.
- **Products are cheaper if they can be collected in person; contact Bill to see if this can be arranged.**



A glimpse of the Burton Unions at Marstons Brewery