

BEER RISING TUN

Autumn/Winter 2019

Issue 127



**Ivy and Amy Rowlands
crank up the steam for the
old CWR Hooter, to signal
the start of the October,
Swindon & North Wilts
Beer Festival**



Campaign
for
Real Ale



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From the Editor...

Just in case there is anyone in the world who doesn't know I've written a book about Swindon's disappeared pubs, there is a note on page 10, giving you all the gen. The book was printed in Kings Lynn in Norfolk, and when we went to view the final proofs, it was a classic opportunity to extend the trip and take in some of the incredible beer brewed locally. From Spalding to Great Yarmouth, Norwich to Bury St Edmunds, some of the country's best ale emanates from Norfolk. We chose a B&B close to the iconic Woodforde's Brewery on the Norfolk Broads in Woodbastwick. The classic Woodforde's beer is of course Wherry, a warm, amber 3.8% abv ... simply delicious. We ate dinner at the Fur and Feathers, part of the brewery complex. Alongside Wherry there was Volt, a 4.5 American IPA and Nelson's Revenge a 4.5% again, but not quite so interesting in my opinion, however there is nothing quite like drinking real ale when it is almost 'piped through the wall!'



Next day we couldn't resist the 30 mile trip down the coast to the charming upmarket settlement of Southwold, home of Adnams brewery, who, after 670 years of experience, really know what they're doing. Jonathan Adnam has modernised and extended their facilities and created a huge Brewery shop, a little way up a High Street filled with delicatessens, art galleries and designer stores. Beyond the beer, I actually fell in love with an 'Adnams blue' golf umbrella, but at £20 the boss thought it unduly extravagant so the

answer was no. I did later have a "told you so" moment a little later when the heavens opened. Taking the A14 home, we passed on Bury St Edmunds and Greene King, now sadly the preserve of the Chinese property developer Li Ka-Shing.

John Stooke
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THE RISING TUN

'THE RISING TUN' is the magazine of Swindon and North Wiltshire branch of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale)

THE LOCAL DIARY

All meetings and social events are relaxed and friendly. Why not come along and join us? Members and non members are equally welcome to attend. Check the website before setting out in case of any last minute changes. Meetings usually begin at 8.00pm. Upcoming dates are:

Monday, 9th December 2019

The Manor, Cheney Manor Road, SN2 2NX

Monday, 13th January 2020

The GW Hotel, 73 Station Road, SN1 1DH

Monday, 10th February 2020

The Hop Inn, Devizes Road, SN1 4BH

JOKes

I was attacked in the street last night by a man carrying a power tool, just minding my own business when suddenly ... BOSCH ...

AROUND OUR PUBS

An occasional feature in which we highlight some of the lesser known pubs in our local area and provide some well-deserved publicity. This month we are featuring the Nine Elms in Old Shaw Lane.



Now if you, like me, thought that the Nine Elms was a property development project just waiting to begin, then you have another think coming. The owners are completely committed to making the pub work and have appointed new, popular, landlords Karen and Dan Carter to take the pub forward.

In some ways its West Swindon's best kept secret. A warm friendly atmosphere serving quality ales, lagers and ciders at attractive prices. Live sport is on and also drinks promotions during selected live events.

There's a huge family and dog friendly garden. A regular Wednesday quiz began on 30th October, and there are of course, pool and darts which are encouraged. Friday night sees innovation in the kitchen with a number of food specials.

We, at CAMRA, applaud and encourage these efforts to maintain and develop the town's pub infrastructure. Running a pub in 2019 is not an easy task and what it needs is support and patronage from us, the general public in order to protect these vital local assets for the future.

ENDEVOUR MORSE

This week I invested £24 in buying the complete DVD set of Inspector Morse dramas. It set me thinking about Colin Dexter, the academic, turned author, who was the creator of Morse, and the inspiration for Morses' love of real ale.

Before she passed away, my daughter Kelly, had the pleasure of interviewing Colin at his home in North Oxford. She described him as both charming and one of the most interesting people she ever came across in her journalist career.



Apparently he wrote his first Morse novel as a result of a wet holiday in Wales when he was stuck in a cottage with crime novels he felt were not much good. 18 months later he published 'Last Bus to Woodstock'.

The name Morse was a result of Colin's work as a crossword compiler. For many years the UK crossword championship was won by either Colin or Sir Jeremy Morse, chairman of Lloyds Bank. There was also a crossword compiler called Mrs B. Lewis, from where Morses' long suffering sidekick obtained his moniker. Colin was quite ill toward the latter part of his life, especially from diabetes, and he passed away in March 2017. This illness prevented him from partaking in regular real ale sessions, even though Oxford pubs are renowned for their fine beers.

Throughout his life he felt himself principally a schoolteacher, which had been his chosen career following his degree at Christ's College, Cambridge. He was also a sometime actor, and featured walk on parts in most of the Morse episodes and at least three of the later Lewis series. He gave Kelly, a personally signed copy of Remorseful Day for me, but it's still pristine, as I just can't enjoy reading about the sad end of such an iconic television detective Dexter. Once told Roger Protz that the mind becomes lucid after beer, and if the body enjoys having a drink, then have a drink. Perhaps that is what drives me ... a search for a lucid mind!

Ed

BREWERY NEWS...

Arkells ... The Arkells 'beermobile' was a big hit at the recent CAMRA beer festival at STEAM. Also of interest is the story of John Dance from Haydon End, North Swindon. The 57-year-old has recently completed 40 years delivering barrels of ale around the Arkell estate. Over the time he estimates he has carried a half a million barrels of Arkell's ales to our local hostelryes.

Wadsworths ... Have completed the sale of 18 pubs to Red Oak Taverns. The fifth generation family brewing business, reviewed their estate in 2018, and felt that Red Oak, a company founded in 2011 by Aaron Brown and Mark Grenfell, could better take these non-strategic pubs forward.

Worlds End ... Pewsey .. Helga IPA, a 4.4 ABV brewed for a family wedding, has proved especially popular. Carnival Ale (4.2%) and Viking Gold (4.7%) are complemented by an innovative brew using hops actually grown in the pub garden and known as 'Green Hop'.

Ramsbury ... Mango IPA, a 4.6 ABV, sold especially well at the recent beer festival. For the first time they exhibited Red Ram lager and were pleased with the reception. The festival encouraged one or two lagers and keg beers this year on a trial basis.

Hop Kettle, Cricklade ... Following the sale of the pub to St Austell, brewing has continued, and three Hop Kettle beers remain on the bar at the red Lion. A new brew, snakes head IPA and a collaboration with Tom Kyte at the Prince of Wales in Chippenham are both new initiatives. Heather IPA is also planned for later this month.

Hop Kettle Swindon ... They are busy with their core range. A mini CAMRA event at the Hop Kettle Tap saw 60 members spend a very pleasant Sunday afternoon, listening to live music and enjoying a special and very impressive CAMRA ale. New ideas, coming soon, include a barrel aged milk stout. See below.



Three Castles, Pewsey ... New beers from Three Castles include Dark Scarlet (4.5% ABV), Rare Gold (4.5% ABV) and VIP (4.7% ABV)



As our farmers know all too well: no pain, no grain.

They say nothing worth having comes easy. Unfortunately for our farmers that's true of the barley we use to brew our beers. We use a classic variety called Golden Promise, grown to our own unique specification. The biscuity, golden malt it produces is the perfect partner to our natural spring water, and is vital to Landlord's depth and delicate balance of flavour. It's also a type of barley that's notoriously hard to grow, and our exacting specification makes it even more difficult. Which makes it a costly ingredient and a real challenge even for experienced farmers. Luckily we can offer some liquid therapy.

All for that taste of Taylor's



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THE PUB CODE ISN'T WORKING

Paul Newby's recently announced resignation as the Pub Code Adjudicator, and the inquiry by Parliament (if it can drag its self away from Brexit for two seconds) confirms what many already know, that the good intentions of Parliament are being deliberately and wantonly frustrated by greedy and avaricious Pub Cos.

If you get to York, you must visit the iconic Blue Bell pub in Fossgate. There landlord John Pybus runs a real pub and has made a stab at the market rent option. He said recently, "We're trained for looking after beer, good banter on a Saturday night and a decent Sunday roast ... not protracted legal battle".



The British Pub Confederation said the MRO was little more than a myth, and that pub tenants and MP's have been "duped and betrayed"

Like most landlords, Pybus never got his MRO. The former British Debating Championship runner-up instead, thrashed out a deal face to face with his landlord Punch, helped no doubt by both the publicity and the romantic regard for the Blue Bell, a 200-year-old alehouse whose interior has not changed since 1903 and where York City Football Club was formed!

At another famous alehouse in Clapham, the Eagle, landlord David Law said, "The so-called independent assessors immediately put you off when they say your rent is likely to double and you will need to spend £ thousands in legal fees in protracted negotiations which may go nowhere". Enterprise, his erstwhile landlord, had attached terms to the proposed lease which made it unworkable.

What is clear, is that the present system is already ripe for the review which is now underway, or at least was the last time I checked? ... but with this Government, who knows?

MOSTLY HEART

The Heart and Hand pub in Blunsdon has raised more than £2000 for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance on a charity day filled with competitions.

These included the best cake, the longest runner bean, the heaviest marrow and the best vegetable display. Competitions and pub parties were overlaid by a pub trip to Stratford-upon-Avon, where donations raised close to £1000.

Landlord Steve Leppard said, "This is the most we've ever raised for charity in one year. Over 400 people came to our party on the patio which was brilliant. Complete strangers donated £10 and £20 notes"

Earlier this year, the Wiltshire Air Ambulance launched a new 'Sky's the limit' campaign with TV presenter Paul Martin, challenging businesses to raise as much as possible. The charity needs to raise £3.75 million each year to keep its helicopter ambulance flying and its life saving services operational.



Joke of the Month

A man got the following text from his neighbour.
"I'm so sorry Bob. I'm riddled with guilt and feel I must confess. I have been helping myself to your wife, day and night when you've not been around ... in fact I've probably been getting more than you. I do not get it at home you see – but I realise that's no excuse. I cannot live any longer with this guilt and I hope you accept this apology. I promise you sincerely that it will never happen again"

Bob, struck dumb by the betrayal, went straight to his shed where he kept a gun, grabbed it, returned and straightaway shot his wife dead where she stood, without saying a word.

A few seconds later his phone pinged and another text arrived.

"Damn Bob, don't you just hate this predictive text feature! Should have said your wi-fi ..."

MINI BEER FEST

A small group of CAMRA stalwarts were treated to a day out at the Wetherspoon's Real Ale Festival, held in mid-October, across the 3 local Wetherspoon pubs. Guests met at the Dockle Farm in Stratton and after an hour there tasting a dozen beers, many on stillages, a series of taxis



took members next to the Sir Daniel, where they were introduced to the new Manager who has recently taken over this pub. After an hour there and

more tasting, the group ended up at the Savoy, after a slow stroll, which boasted 18 beers on the bar. Manager Sam Donahy was responsible for the organisation and he made sure members went away with a full stomach, resulting from a stunning range of foods, provided free of charge for CAMRA members. It was agreed Salopian Infinate Orbit, a 5.4 golden IPA took the prize! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day, and had it not been a work day with many unable to get time off, the attendance would have been much bigger.

The next event planned by CAMRA North Wilts and Swindon branch, is likely to be a trip to Bristol and environs sometime in mid-to-late February. If you're interested let the committee know as soon as possible.

PUB OF THE YEAR



CAMRA committee members present the 'Pub of the Year' award to the Red Lion in Cricklade.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISAPPEARED PUBS, A CONNECTION?

After four years of detailed research, local author John Stooke has now completed his 400 page anthology of more than 120 pubs that have disappeared from urban Swindon since 1700 and the disappeared breweries that served them. Additionally it includes



an exhaustive investigation into the legend of Old Town's underground tunnel network.

The BBC reported this week that domestic violence murders in the UK are at a five-year high, with 173 people killed by their partners, up from 141 deaths in 2017. Alongside this one in four women will experience domestic abuse of some degree in her lifetime and locally more than 2000 incidents were reported to our police between April 2015 and March 2016. This could be a low number as many women are terrified to report abuse.

Responding to this, John will donate £3 of the every £10 selling price to Swindon Women's Refuge.

Natasha Moyles of Swindon Women's Aid said "We are delighted to have been chosen as the beneficiary in this case. Initiatives such as John's, enable us to continue to help even more victims of domestic abuse within Swindon".

This looks to be a great Christmas present for 'him' and can be purchased (and dedicated by the author if required) at these venues:

November 16/17th the Designer Outlet Village; November 23rd, West Swindon Centre; December 2nd, Brunel Centre Craft Fayre; December 19th/20th The Savoy, Magnum Wine Store or alternatively on any day at the Central Library main desk or the STEAM Museum shop.

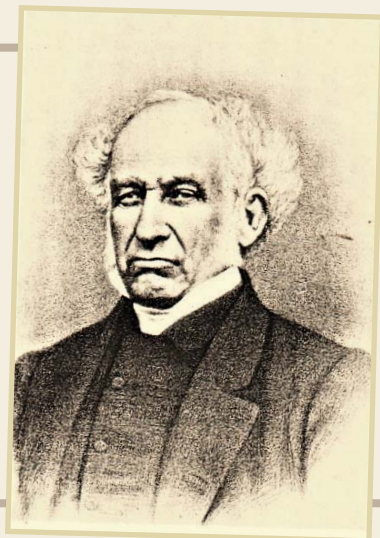
JOKEs

Good news! It's been announced that scientists have at last found the gene that is responsible for obesity ... and she works in McDonalds ...

In Praise of HONEST John Arkell

“truly a man of vision”

Farmer, Explorer and Businessman John Arkell pictured in 1870



I was unfortunate that in my recent book, I was unable to devote space to the people at Kingsdown and the brewery history. As the book addressed only pubs and breweries no longer with us. It's, in a way, good news that Arkells is not to be found there.

In 1840 Swindon was a small, pleasant country town, devoting its whole attention to agricultural and a little stone quarrying.

John Arkell was born to a farming family in Kempford in 1802. He and his cousin Thomas emigrated to Canada in 1830. They took with them a number of locals and established the settlement of Arkell in Canada which still thrives today.

He returned in 1834 to marry and devote his time to farming, settling down on a farm at Upper Stratton, several miles from the family farm. He had quickly understood the opportunity that the railway works could provide, having witnessed the rapid growth of other small breweries. After toiling in the massive workshops, these men needed refreshment and it was hardly surprising that the number of pubs and beer houses in the area mushroomed.

Always against using beer from others, John established his first brewery in Swindon Road in 1843, very near a house called 'The Close' Before long these premises were outgrown. In 1861 he moved to a site behind the then Kingsdown Inn, to develop a new steam brewery, on the same site as it stands today. Even this new enlarged facility was soon not adequate to cope with demand, so it was extended in 1849 before a large maltings was constructed in

1876. The Kingsdown Inn, which had been the stone building on the left-hand corner, was rebuilt across the road in 1877 to provide more opportunity for brewery expansion.



The New Kingsdown Inn 1877

The first pub he acquired was the Lord Raglan in Cricklade Street Swindon and by this time sons Thomas and James were partners in the company.

Unlike many other local brewers at the time, it seems John had no interest in exploiting the free-trade, rather his business model involved initially leasing, then buying, freeholds wherever he could. In 20 years of local newspapers, there are only one or two advertisements for Kingsdown Ales. One in 1860 announced: 4X at 1/8d, 3X at 1/4d and XX at 1/0d and table ale at 6d (2.5p today) a GALLON!

He made steady yet unspectacular progress, in acquiring pubs, here and there, as they came on the market and also building new ones. A lifelong Liberal he was in a constant battle to get Tory Magistrates to grant or even to transfer licenses, in the early days.

His death at the company's malthouse on October 21st, 1881 was much mourned by the local community. The Evening Advertiser stated that "He was open and above board in all he said and did. The poor have lost a good friend, a plain and simple friend."

Fine Stratton historian Dr Fred Fuller said in 1979 "I find John Arkell an amazing man. He was a great liberal while his sons were Tory! (That's a few more points in my book, Ed) John actually paid for St Phillips Church and had it built because he disapproved of the Vicar of Stratton and the Vicar at St Barnabas, which at that time came under Stratton. He also paid the Revd J. Calley, the vicar of Blunsdon St Andrew, to run the new St Philips Church at Upper Stratton. He envisaged St Philips as a place of worship for those sedate Church of England people who wished to worship in the fashion to which they were accustomed. It proved extremely popular with many travelling from urban Swindon".



Time has not altered John's original vision.

Great Western Hotel.

It is hard to overestimate the role played by the Arkell family in the history of brewing and pubs in the Swindon area. By 1900, Arkell's owned more than a quarter of all public houses around Swindon and was firmly established as a cornerstone of life in the town.

Swindon's love/hate relationship with Arkell's bitter had already been running for almost 60 years, by the time Queen Victoria handed over to Edward VIII.

So many family brewers over the years 'have taken the money and run' and I imagine this family has had many such opportunities since John's humble beginnings. What they have done however is to stick with Swindon, with their employees, and remain true to their roots. They have been a huge supporter of Swindon pub businesses whilst alongside operating a successful, growing and relevant company.

John Stooke

JOKes

Last week I went to the doctor with a hearing problem. He said to me "Can you describe the symptoms" I said ... "Homer's a little fat bloke and Marge has got blue hair"

THE BEEHIVE

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BEER FESTIVAL ROUND UP

NOVEMBER

8th/9th

Woking Beer Festival at Woking Leisure Centre
www.wokingbeerfestival.co.uk

JANUARY

17th/18th

Exeter Beer Fest, Exeter City FC, St James Park
www.exetercamra.org

MEET THE BREWER



Chris James tells me that there will be a quiz and the opportunity to meet the brewer from Gough's Brewery at the Carter's Rest, Wroughton on Thursday, 6th February 2020 at 7.30pm. See you there!

A welcome sight at the 33rd Great Swindon and North Wiltshire beer festival held at the end of last month at STEAM. Chairman Vince Chilcott described the event as "a great success". As you can see the stillages were almost bare and the four brewery bars, including Arkells Beermobile, were pretty much sold out as well. Already looking forward to next year!

GOOD BEER GUIDE 2020

The 2020 edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide is now on sale. It can be purchased locally by emailing Richard James, Secretary (richard.james@iname.com) at the member's price of £11.00

It lists, for our branch, 17 splendid local alehouses where you can be guaranteed both choice and delivery of a superb point of the real stuff.

Whilst it includes many well-known pubs such as the Blunsdon Arms, the Savoy, the Glue Pot, the Hop Inn, the Beehive, and the Carter's Rest, there are two new entrants this year, the Bruce Arms near Pewsey and the Royal Oak in Marlborough's High Street.

The Bruce Arms is located between the villages of Milton Lilbourn and Easton Royal (SN9 5LJ if you fancy an early visit) Landlord Matt Jump is justifiably proud that the Bruce is a well-loved family and dog friendly pub with its own campsite at the rear. Not only now featuring in the GBG, the pub is recognised by CAMRA as being of national historic importance, only one of two pubs in Wiltshire to achieve this status.

The Royal Oak is a Greene King pub with a large



following of locals, tourists and the student population. Similar to the Beehive in Swindon, the pub is not content with the bog standard Abbott/Speckled Hen/IPA offer, and goes out of its way to offer real choice to real ale enthusiasts. Coupled with quality pub food at reasonable prices, this is surely



somewhere worthy of a trip out?

Our longest continuous GBG entry pubs are the Five Bells in Royal Wootton Bassett and the Red Lion at Cricklade.

Above ... John Stooke, CAMRA Vice Chairman, presents Blunsdon Arms landlord Steve Williams with the official letter marking the pub's inclusion again this year.

BEERY BITS

A News Round Up in Brief

Lager sales have gone flat for some of the top brands figures reveal. Beck's takings dived by a quarter to £45.3 million. Budweiser sales dipped by £15.5 million. Carlsberg has slid 11% which is £12.3 million globally down to £98.1 million said analyst Nielsen for the Grocer Magazine. So there is a God after all!

A Samuel Smiths pub is closed after a surprise inspection by the Tadcaster brewery court drinkers on mobile phones. Customers at the Cheshire Midland pub in Hale were caught on the Internet and sending texts. The ban, introduced last March, was imposed with the intention of encouraging more social conversation. As with all sands missed pubs the Cheshire had no television or entertainment, no food and no children allowed, but it did serve some of the best and cheapest beer in the area. Now there's something Swindon landlords might consider.

Kellogg's (yes the cornflake kings) are the latest company to make a beer using edible food which would otherwise become waste. The beer, 'Throw Away', a 5% ABV light ale, will help the cereal manufacturer cut down on food waste. Seven Bro7thers, a brewery

based in Salford, near Manchester, swapped parts of the usual mash for cornflakes to big or too small or overcooked for use in retail. Around 30% of the grain content in this beer is cornflakes and 70% remains as wheat.

Molson Coors, the brains behind Sharps Brewery in Padstow, has acquired London craft brewer 'Hop Stuff' and its tap rooms. This deal sees Molson join the list of international breweries with a presence in London. Whilst Doom Bar is the largest selling ale in the UK, (in part due to very low pricing and huge promotion), this is not all good news, as it marginalises large numbers of small specialist ale breweries. When American global corporate come to call, we should perhaps remember Donald Trump's repeated mantra ... "America First".

Cheltenham town centre local, the famous Sandford Park Alehouse, has been sold to independent group Burliston Inns. Burliston, set up in 1996 by Gary and Catherine Burliston, has a reputation for taking over established pubs and running them with few changes. Let's hope that reputation continues!



A festive poster for Arkell's Outdoor Christmas Food & Craft Market. The background is a warm tan color with scattered white dots. On the left is a stylized black Christmas tree decorated with red and white ornaments and a star on top. In the top left corner, a black circle contains the text 'SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER' in white. The main title 'ARKELL'S OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS' is in large, white, serif font on a red rectangular background, with 'FOOD & CRAFT MARKET' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the title is a small logo for 'ARKELL'S FAMILY BREWERS ESTD 1983' with the website 'WWW.ARKELL'S.COM'. Below the title, the text 'Food Stalls & Local Crafts' is written in a large, black, cursive font. Underneath that, a light blue box contains the text 'Visit Father Christmas and his Reindeer (Reindeer from 10.00am-2.00pm)'. At the bottom, the opening times are listed: 'GROTTO OPENING TIMES: 10.30am-11.30am, 12.00pm-1.00pm and 1.30pm-2.30pm'. Below the times, it says 'AT ARKELL'S BREWERY, STRATTON, SWINDON - FROM 10AM 'TIL 3PM'. On the right side, there is an illustration of a woman in a red dress holding several wrapped gifts.

SATURDAY
7TH
DECEMBER

ARKELL'S OUTDOOR
CHRISTMAS
FOOD & CRAFT MARKET

ARKELL'S
FAMILY BREWERS
ESTD 1983
WWW.ARKELL'S.COM

**Food Stalls
& Local Crafts**

Visit Father Christmas and his Reindeer
(Reindeer from 10.00am-2.00pm)

GROTTO OPENING TIMES: 10.30am-11.30am, 12.00pm-1.00pm and 1.30pm-2.30pm
AT ARKELL'S BREWERY, STRATTON, SWINDON - FROM 10AM 'TIL 3PM

STUNNING STUDLAND

Those of you, who, like me, value the opportunity to get down to Bournemouth, Sandbanks and Studland in the summer, will probably be aware of this low profile, gem of a pub, without being reminded.

I'm referring of course to the Banks Arms, which is opposite the pathway to South Beach, just around the corner from Old Harry rocks, which signal the change to the Jurassic coast into Swanage Bay. It has a large National Trust car park to the rear (paid unfortunately as all in this area) but there is pub parking at less busy times. But it's not only cars in this car park!



As you can see below the Isle of Purbeck Brewery shares space with the cars. Although unimpressive from the outside, I can assure you their Equinox 4% fine ale on the bar was superb.

The Banks Arms Inn could almost set the blueprint for every traditional country pub. (Oh but every one could have their own breweries!) It dates back to the 16th century and is built from local quarried stone and surrounded by lush Purbeck countryside. Not every other country pub is this close to the sea with views across Studland Bay towards Poole, Bournemouth and the Isle of Wight. You can also stay there. They have 10 splendid B&B rooms, with mostly ensuite facilities and all with views of either the sea or the countryside and in some cases both. We were there on a busy summer's day but definitely thinking of going back, in the cooler weather, when we can enjoy long walks around the Jurassic Coast Heritage site.



WHAT'S WRONG WITH CHINESE PROPERTY DEVELOPERS OWNING OUR PUBS AND BREWERIES, INSTEAD OF SMALL BUSINESSMEN WHO VALUE THEIR CUSTOMERS?

The purchase of Greene King by a Hong Kong property developer increases the need to find a way to prevent further erosion of our brewing heritage via brewery takeovers. What can be done to stop the loss of British breweries with a knock-on effect to pubs, beer and drinker's choice. CK, the developer in question, has no experience of running pubs or brewing. Frankly it's amazing they would throw an astronomical £2.7 billion at Greene King shareholders without clear ideas as to how they are going to recoup this investment ... and it certainly won't be labouring to make the Beehive an even better pub than it is today! I'll leave you to work out their business plan.

The worst-case scenario is that the company will sell swathes of pubs turning them into housing, mini-markets or more betting shops.

People say you can't stop takeovers but can you imagine the French allowing leading champagne producers be taken over by Chinese? Would German lager producers allow their cherished breweries to end up as simply property development opportunities. I think not. I'm sorry if this is one of those "something must be done" articles with no real idea of what to do, but that's exactly what is. In a post-Brexit Britain everything seems for sale, mostly to companies far removed from our culture or heritage. Frankly there seems no end in sight as the £ sterling progressively declines in value and our assets look attractive to those who wish to exploit them.

Greene King brewery and its 2700 pubs are now subsumed in a Chinese company, registered in the Cayman Islands, that, unlike Greene King, in all likelihood, won't pay a penny in corporation tax to the British government.

Good idea? You decide.

VOUCHERS



Don't know about you but I think the new CAMRA miniature vouchers are much more convenient than the old larger ones, even though sometimes they seem a wee bit too small, when I just can't find

one in my pocket!

It's also true that the fact they are not based on four discrete quarters, after which time they expire, is a great boon to the not so regular real ale enthusiast.

The trade seems to like them. Over 100 new pubs have joined the new voucher scheme since it launched in the summer taking the overall number of pubs accepting CAMRA vouchers to over 1500.

Amber Taverns is the latest pub chain to come on board, offering discounts on real ale served at its 89 regional pubs.

It joins JD Wetherspoon's, the Stonegate Pub Company, SA Brains, Castle Rock Brewery and 15 or so independents. Presently the Goddard Arms and the Wyvern in the Stonegate group locally, take vouchers, but it will be fascinating to see whether their acquisition of thousands of Enterprise Inns have the scheme extended to them.

CAMRA members are entitled to £30 worth of vouchers worth 50p each off a pint. In addition over 3500 pubs offer CAMRA members variable discounts on production of a card, with the Royal Oak at Marlborough leading the way locally. People tell me that individuals only join CAMRA to get their £30 worth of beer discount (for a £20 + annual subscription). Well I can think of worse reasons.

Ed

JOKes

Thank you, and now, next up tonight,
all the way from Edinburgh, the latest indie
band on the circuit, THEEEE BALIFFS!!! ...
take it away boys ...

PUB NEWS...

Swindon and North Wiltshire Branch

The Barge at Honey Street, Pewsey is now open 7 days a week with a full music line up for their 'Argy Bargee' weekends. **The Red Lion at Castle Eaton** is now reopen after a complete make over. Similarly the **Sun at Lydiard** has also had a stunning makeover and is now open for business. **The Royal George in Pavenhill, Purton** is now re-opened and friends tell me it's looking very good. **The Steam Railway** is due to re-open before Christmas with Punch now running it directly, no news on the **John Groves**. **The Goldfinger Tavern at Highworth** re-opened on October 22nd six weeks after the previous managers suddenly up and left. It has been taken over by Sheldon Inns. **The Crumpled Horn** continues to decline with "rubbish, vandalism and neglect blighting the Eldene grade 2 listed pub" according to local resident Tony Bonner 77. Owner Star Bars say they are still looking for someone to take it over (how hard?) **The Clifton** under the leadership of Darren Turner, will be doing a series of mini events. **The Angel in Wotton Bassett** and the **Red Lion, Cricklade** have been included in the AA's 2020 restaurant Guide. **The Who'd have Thought it at Lockridge near Marlborough** is now re-opened but the **Outside Chance in Manton** is temporarily closed. **The Three Tuns at Great Bedwyn** is included in this year's Wiltshire Good Food Guide. **The Churchill House at Wootton Bassett** is closed for a major refurbishment. **The Globe in Highworth** is currently closed. **The New Inn at Winterbourne Bassett** is planning regular live music events. **The Brown Jack at Wroughton** is seeking a new tenant as is the **Royal Oak in Pewsey**. Fullers are seeking a new tenant for the **Check Inn at Wroughton**. A 1901 stone recovered from Sturrey Cottage on Highworth Road now takes pride of place in the new **Rat Trap** function room, named after the cottage.

JOIN US AT CAMRA....COME ALONG, MEET NEW FRIENDS, GET INVOLVED...

You perhaps pick up the 'Tun' occasionally, or maybe this is your first time, and you get to this last bit and think ... Why should I bother to join? What's the offer ... terrific fresh real ale, chance to get away and chat, the company of warm, welcoming, like minded friends, and knowing you play a part in one of the biggest and

most successful pressure groups in UK history.

We meet monthly and organise lots of social events.

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