

RISING

THE



TUN

The Old English word 'Tun'...

...means a cask or barrel of beer

**The joint newsletter from the Swindon & North Wiltshire and
Devizes branches of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale)**

Essential reading for beer lovers everywhere

FREE!

*please take
one*

Moving On Up!

**Ramsbury; take a look at their new
brewery and find out whether bigger
means better.**

**Autumn 2014
Issue No. 107**

**Swindon
Beer Festival!**

**The Fab Four:
WATER**

**Ramsbury
Brewery**



'THE RISING TUN'

The newsletter of Swindon & North Wiltshire and Devizes branches of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale)

Editor: Mark Nelson editor@swindoncamra.org.uk

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The newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July & October and distributed to pubs and other drinking establishments across Swindon, Devizes and the surrounding areas of North Wiltshire. Please email the editor if you would like to be included on the distribution list.

The editor would like to thank the following for their valuable contributions and help with this issue:

Chris James, Hans Hoffbauer, Richard James, Ben Staite, Alex Harkness and other members of the Swindon & North Wiltshire branch.

Back issues, along with all Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA branch Real Ale news, can be found on our websites; www.swindoncamra.org.uk www.devizescamra.org.uk

Think of the environment; please share this issue of 'The Rising Tun' before disposing of it carefully.

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The Local Diary

All meetings and social events are relaxed and friendly. Please feel free to come along and join in. All CAMRA members and non-members are welcome to attend. Please remember to check the websites (see above) before setting off for any of the entries listed below, in case of amendments to timings/venue. All meetings start at 8pm unless specified otherwise.

SWINDON & NORTH WILTSHIRE BRANCH

13th Oct Branch Meeting	Kings , 20 Wood Street, Swindon SN1 4AB
10th Nov Branch Meeting	Red Lion , 74 High Street, Cricklade SN6 6DD
8 th Dec Branch Meeting	Brown Jack , Priors Hill, Wroughton, SN4 0RT
12 th Jan Branch Meeting	Pig On The Hill , 8 Devizes Road, Swindon SN1 4BH

DEVIZES BRANCH

7 th Oct Branch Meeting	The George And Dragon , Erlestoke, Devizes, SN10 5TX
4 th Nov Branch Meeting	Black Horse , Devizes, SN10 2AU

Find our meetings on Facebook, search: CAMRA Swindon

Welcome

From Swindon & North Wilts. CAMRA

Evenings a little cooler, the open fires in many of our local pubs are a welcome companion to our favourite beverage, so go and enjoy them both. It's amazing to think that Christmas will have come and gone by the time the next issue of the 'Tun' arrives in your local, so it's not too early to remind readers that the Good Beer Guide 2015 makes an excellent present. If you've not already got a copy, make sure Santa has it on his list for the big day. Until then, keep safe, keep warm and keep drinking!

Mark Nelson Editor

PUBS MATTER!

As CAMRA figures released in August show that pub closures have risen to 31 per week, it's time for Government to recognise that Pubs Matter.

Campaign Column & CAMRA news

Did you know pubs can be converted into other uses including small supermarket stores, estate agents and even pet shops without planning permission?

Did you know two pubs a week are being converted to small supermarket stores?

Did you know pubs can also be demolished without planning permission?

CAMRA has launched a new hard-hitting campaign to urge the Government to close national planning loopholes. The campaign aims to give power back to local communities by ensuring planning permission is always required before the change of use or demolition of a pub.

Local pubs are currently closing at an alarming rate and every week two pubs are converted into supermarkets. CAMRA says the current planning system too often leaves local communities powerless to act in the face of big companies and unscrupulous developers keen to exploit these loopholes.

Under current planning law, pubs can be demolished or converted into several other uses including supermarkets and estate agents without requiring planning permission.

CAMRA says allowing pubs to be converted without a planning application is ludicrous – and Government must step in and close these loopholes as a matter of urgency.

Tom Stainer, CAMRA's Head of Communications said: "Popular and profitable pubs are being left vulnerable by gaps in English planning legislation as pubs are increasingly being targeted by those wishing to take advantage of the absence of proper planning control.

"It is wrong that communities are left powerless when a popular local pub is threatened with demolition or conversion into a Tesco store. It is time for the Government to stop standing by while pubs are being targeted due to gaps in planning law."

With a simple amendment to the General Permitted Development Order 1995, any demolition or change of use involving the loss of a pub, would require planning permission. This small change by Government would save hundreds of pubs from closure and give communities a powerful new weapon in the battle to protect our pubs.

To support the campaign please visit www.pubsmattter.org.uk

Out & About



Mid-June saw another popular brewery visit for the members of Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA. This time the coach headed west to Bristol for a taste of Independence, courtesy of the guys at the Bristol Beer Factory. ...

We arrived slightly ahead of time and were greeted by Steve Feely, one of the most enthusiastic brewers we've had the pleasure of meeting. Just as soon as everyone had a beer in hand, Steve proceeded to recount the history that surrounded the building in which the BBF craft their stunning beers.

The building was part of an old fermenting block belonging to Ashton Gate Brewery that dates back to 1904 and the current brewery is situated in an area where the 'racking' of beer would take place. Ashton Gate Brewery was later taken over by George's & Co but Georges Brewery was wound up shortly after and it wasn't until the Bristol Beer Factory was set up in 2004 that brewing was restored to the ancient building.

And while it became obvious from our guide that tradition is very important to the BBF team, it doesn't stand in the way of experimentation and innovation. It was evident that they love what they do and are proud to be part of the current craft beer revolution.

The cask ales on tap when we arrived were Seven – an amber beer, full of malt sweetness with a smooth hop bitterness and the delightful Nova. The latter punched above its stated 3.9% abv, thanks to a generous helping of Citra, Cascade and Centennial hops which complimented the light malt base.

We were also privileged to have various bottle tastings, including the multi-award winning Milk Stout, which won gold at this year's SIBA National Awards.

Once the brewery visit was over, the coach took us towards Bristol Harbour where our group split up to explore what other beery delights Bristol had in store for us. Some headed to the Bristol Beer Emporium, others to the Bag O' Nails, a pub which dates back to the 1860's while yours truly opted to sit in the sunshine atop the Grain Barge, a 1936 boat which was converted into a moored bar in 2007. A most pleasant way to spend a sunny Saturday with a beer in hand.

After a regroup on the coach, we headed back for Swindon via the Three Crowns at Chippenham which rounded off another successful trip. These social events are only open to CAMRA members, so if you would like to come along, fill in the membership form on page 14 and get involved!



PUB NEWS



Swindon & North Wiltshire Branch

The **Red Lion** at Baydon is now a 'Free House'.

The **Three Horseshoes** at Stibbs Green near Burbage is under new management and is currently progressing towards a 'Cask Marque' accreditation.

The Trotting Horse at Bushton has re-opened.

The Antelope in Upavon has also re-opened recently and is under new management.

The Beehive in Swindon has recently been refurbished.

The Rose and Crown in Highworth has undergone a refurbishment and is under new management.

The Fox in Highworth has been converted to an Antique shop with tea room.

As mentioned in a previous edition, the **Queensfield** pub has closed and confirmation has now been received that the council have approved plans to build 10 homes on the site.

To view the plans visit the council website; www.swindon.gov.uk/planning and search for application number S/14/0753.

Chris James, *pub correspondent*
Swindon and North Wiltshire Branch



Available Now!

The Fab 4

Most of us will be familiar with the four humble ingredients that go into making our precious pint. In this four-part series, *Mark Nelson* delves a little deeper into what each of the four brings to the table and how they affect the taste and appearance of Britain's most loved drink.

Part 3: Water

You might not be aware, but the most obvious and fundamental ingredient in beer, water, or 'liquor' as it's referred to by brewers, makes a huge impact on the quality of the finished product.

Old time brewers became to realise that certain water supplies were more suitable than others for brewing a particular style of beer. As a result, one of the major factors in the selection of a site for early breweries was the suitability of the water supply.

As it was rare to find a water supply that was satisfactory for all types of beer, locations became famous for a particular style. The most well known is probably the production of pale ales from Burton, but think also of the porters from London and lagers from the Czech Republic of Pilsen.

The reason for this is the chemical makeup of the local water supply. Water falling as rain dissolves gasses such as oxygen and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. On reaching the ground the water then runs into rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs. Depending upon the natural geology of the landscape, the water then takes on different elements. In areas where rocks are hard, the water will not penetrate deeply and will be low in dissolved salts (or soft), whereas rain penetrating a more permeable rock structure will dissolve many minerals on its way to the reservoir, (making it hard).

On top of this, water authorities process the water so it's filtered and purified of harmful products. Most of the original mineral salts will remain in solution, together with microscopic quantities of organic matter which pass through the fine filters and even though small controlled doses of chlorine are added to reduce the microbiological count, the water in the mains supply is not sterile.

Thankfully the micro organisms which remain are usually not sufficient to cause any spoilage during the brewing process as they are unable to survive either the high ethanol and hop resin levels, or the

low pH found in beers. However, the various levels of minerals in solution make a huge impact.

As an example, during the 'mashing' process (where the malt is steeped in hot water to extract the sugars), the conversion of the malt starch to sugar can only take place if the mixture of crushed grain and water is slightly acidic in nature. And so minute is the amount of acid needed, that even the common salts found in our water supply are enough to upset the delicate reactions.

Furthermore, the amount of acid formed during the mashing process is dependent upon the types of malts used, which is why the water in some regions was found to be better for producing pale ales, while in other regions, the use of more acidic, darker, malts, worked better with their local water supply.

In modern times, brewing liquor is treated with acid and salt additions which make it possible to adjust the water to suit whatever beer style is being brewed. This is why modern day brewers can now produce a range of beers of the same exacting quality.

So although water might not be considered one of the sexiest ingredients in beer, it plays a huge role; not only so that the sugars can be extracted efficiently from the grains, it can alter the mouthfeel and complexity of the beer, enhance the hop bitterness and is also a factor in producing the necessary enzymes to aid fermentation. And with your finished pint being over 90% water, it's certainly one of the most important.



SWINDON BEER FESTIVAL

23rd - 25th October 2014

The best beer in the country...

Swindon's 28th Annual beer festival takes place at the STEAM museum on 23rd - 25th October, the same venue which has played host to the festival since 2006.

As in previous years, food and snacks will be available and this year will see the introduction of a marquee outside of the main hall, which will provide a covered seating area for those purchasing food.

Please note that admission to the Friday evening session is by ticket only and these need to be purchased in advance from the participating outlets shown below. Swindon CAMRA would ask you to note that the pubs selling advance tickets do not receive any commission for doing so. They are simply lending their support for the CAMRA beer festival, so when purchasing tickets,

please show your support by staying for a drink or two. Tickets for Friday evening are £10 and include admission plus £4.00 worth of beer tokens. **Foot travellers will be pleased to note that the tunnel under the Main Line between Emlyn Square and the STEAM museum site will be OPEN through the evening sessions** (it closed much earlier last year).



SESSIONS

THURSDAY: 6.00pm - 11.00pm
£5.00 admission

FRIDAY LUNCH: 11.00am - 3.30pm
£5.00 admission

FRIDAY EVENING: 6.00pm - 11.00pm
£10.00 admission*
*** by advance ticket only / includes**
£4.00 beer tokens

SATURDAY: 11.00am - 7.00pm
£4.00 admission

**STEAM, The Museum of the Great
Western Railway, Fire Fly Avenue,
Swindon SN2 2EY**

ADVANCED TICKET SALES

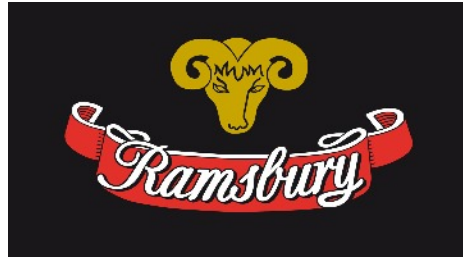
For Friday evening:

The Beehive: 55 Prospect Hill Swindon SN1 3JS
The Carters Rest: 57 High Street, Wroughton SN4 9JU
The Glue Pot: 5 Emlyn Square, Swindon SN1 5BP
The Hopp Inn: 7 Devizes Road, Swindon SN1 4BJ

CHAMPION BEERS!

Don't miss out on the best beer in the country. Your local CAMRA branch are endeavouring to have the newly crowned Champion Beer Of Britain available at the Swindon beer festival. Timothy Taylor 'Boltmaker' took Gold at the Great British Beer Festival, ahead of Oakham 'Citra' (Silver) and Salopian 'Darwins Origin' (Bronze) and we are hopeful that all three will be available. There will also be plenty of local offerings and if you head to 'Brewery News' on page 13 you'll have details of what some of our local breweries will have on the stillage...

It's unlikely there'll be many local real ale drinkers that have yet to sample at least one of the offerings from Ramsbury Brewery.



Established in 2004, their first ale, Ramsbury Gold, has become a firm favourite with drinkers across Wiltshire and beyond.

Brewed on the Ramsbury Estate, in the heart of the countryside where it straddles Wiltshire's beautiful Kennet Valley, the farmland is focussed largely on grain production and it's from this barley that every pint of Ramsbury beer is brewed. And brewing in Ramsbury has been something of a tradition, dating back as far as the 18th Century. There's reference in the Wiltshire Directory of 1791-97 in which Ramsbury is noted for 'its excellent beer, of which there is great consumption in London'. And the success of Ramsbury beer looks set to continue as there have been many changes over the last year which has seen the brewery prepare for expansion, in anticipation of future growth.

The brewery originally housed a 10 barrel plant and a decade later, it's been necessary to move into a new building to accommodate new equipment which has seen the brewery expand to a 30 barrel brewlength.

Any visitor will struggle to deny that the brand new, German manufactured, stainless steel plant is an impressive sight. But, what's equally impressive, is the whole ethos behind the

Rasbury Brewery brewing procedure.

For starters, the malt they use is grown on the Ramsbury Estate itself.



outdoor seating area

The estate produces over 2000 tonnes of Maris Otter barley which is sent to Warminster Maltings to be malted and crushed, before being returned to the brewery for use in their ale production. And nothing is wasted.

Once a brew is completed, the spent malt finds its way back to the farm as animal feed for the Highland cattle. The hops that add the flavour and aroma to your pint are also reused, stored in silos and added back to the land as a natural fertiliser. And it doesn't stop there. The casks are cleaned using a four stage process; firstly a rinse, a caustic clean, followed by a further rinse and then a final steam to ensure good sanitisation. And throughout, the steam boiler providing the heat and the steam, is powered by woodchips from the estates own woodland.

Every brewery will produce plenty of waste water and while some of this contains organic pollutants like bits of hop-litter, protein and suspended solids, it also includes some chemical pollutants too, from the use of industrial strength detergents.

Instead of this water being flushed back into the mains system, Ramsbury Brewery intend to create a reed bed system.



new fermenters

As certain reeds can actually digest most, if not all, of the nasties a brewery generates, this is a most environmentally friendly way of dealing with the waste. The other upside is that it will also provide a haven for wildlife. Although a slow and expensive process, the proposal of a reed bed system at Ramsbury confirms the respect they



mill house



distillery equipment

farm buildings, there's now a well stocked shop, a visitor's centre which includes a fully functioning bar with four hand pumps and a pleasant outside seating area.

h a v e
for the environment and completes the cycle of everything being returned to the earth. As if to further emphasise this, at the time of our visit, a borehole was being drilled some 130 metres into the chalk hillside to enable the brewery to source their own water.



borehole drilling

All this expansion has meant a move into some new buildings across the road from the original brewery site. Occupying some of the existing

There's also a new mill house, as the brewery plan to crush their own grain, not only for their beer, but in readiness for their brand new distillery. Germany's oldest distillery fabricator has supplied the impressive equipment which will be used to produce vodka (using the farms own wheat, naturally), with plans to expand into the gin and whiskey markets, further down the line.

With all this expansion it will come as no surprise to learn that Ramsbury turned out more brews in 2013 than ever before and at the time of writing, 2014 was already looking to exceed those figures.

So it's exciting times ahead for the brewery team at Ramsbury and that can only be good news for the drinkers of Wiltshire too.

Mark Nelson



BEER FESTIVALS

The following is a selection of beer festivals over the coming months. This is not intended to be a comprehensive guide. For a more complete list of festivals, please visit the main CAMRA website; www.camra.org.uk/beerfestivals

October

Thur 17th - Sat 19th

17th Oxford Beer & Cider Fest - Town Hall, St.Aldate's Street, Oxford

Thur 23rd - Sat 25th

28th Swindon Beer Festival - STEAM Museum, Swindon SN2 2EY

Thur 23rd - Sat 25th

14th Twickenham Beer & Cider Fest - York House, Richmond Rd, Twickenham TW1 3AA

Mon 27th - Sat 1st

37th Norwich Beer Fest - St Andrews & Blackfriars Halls, Norwich

Tues 28th - Sun 2nd

The Inn With The Well - Halloween Beer Fest - Ogbourne St George, SN8 1SQ

Wed 29th - Sat 1st

Birmingham Beer & Cider Fest - New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, Birmingham B18 5PP

November

Thur 6^h - Sat 8th

24th Wakefield Beer Fest - Space Wakefield Waldorf Way, Wakefield WF2 8DH

Fri 7th - Sat 8th

Grimsby Beer Fest - Matrix Club, 29a Bethlehem Street, Grimsby DN31 1JN

Thur 13th - Sat 15th

Rotherham CAMRA, New York Championship Beer Fest - New York Stadium, Rotherham

Fri 14th - Sat 15th

5th Saltburn Beer Fest - Community & Arts Centre, Albion Terrace, Saltburn TS12 1JW

Tues 18th - Sat 22nd

36th Rochford Beer & Cider Fest - Freight House, Rochford, SS4 1BU

December

Fri 5th - Sun 7th

Carters Rest 9th Winter Beer Festival - Carters Rest, Wroughton SN4 9JU starts at midday.

Thur 18th - Sun 21st

Crown Inn Annual Winter Solstice Beer Festival - Crown Inn, Pewsey SN9 5EL

Due to issues with the national CAMRA website may we apologise for being unable to provide a more comprehensive beer festival list for December and January. We are hopeful these issues will be resolved shortly, so normal service can resume in the next edition, published on 12th January.

Please refer to our CAMRA websites for further details on forthcoming local beer festivals. If you are holding a Beer Festival, however large or small, please email editor@swindoncamra.org.uk with the details, so we can ensure it is posted on our branch website and include it in a forthcoming edition of The Rising Tun.



BREWERY NEWS

ARKELL'S

Arkell's are midway through their latest series of beers showcasing individual hop varieties. The current project consists of a series of four beers, over four months, using different international hops.

The August beer used Waimea hops from New Zealand, the September beer used Bobek hops from Slovenia, while October showcases the Centennial hop from the United States and the November beer will feature Marynka hops from Poland.

The astute reader will have gathered from this, that it will be the Centennial beer that will be on the stillage at the Swindon Beer Festival!

In other news, Arkell's Brewery has once again renewed its sponsorship of Swindon Town Football Club, signing a six-figure commitment for the next three years.

The deal includes continued sponsorship of the Arkell's stand, now a multi-million pound structure but for which Thomas Arkell of Arkell's Brewery loaned £300 in the 1896 to finance the construction of a stand on what was then known as the 'Wiltshire County Ground'. This investment was enough to begin development of a purpose built football ground seen today.

THREE CASTLES

Little to report from the brewers at Pewsey based Three Castles, although they will be represented at the Swindon Beer Festival by their popular seasonal offering 'Witches Brew'.

WORLD'S END

Worlds End Brewery are based at The Crown Inn in Pewsey and are currently brewing 'Hakka Hopper' (abv 3.8%) using New Zealand hops and 'Bitterus Magnus' (abv 4.2%). Both ales will be represented at the Beer Festival in October.

WEIGHBRIDGE BREWHOUSE

The Weighbridge Brewhouse has two new names lined-up for the autumn - 'Headbanger' and a seriously ginger ale, full of chilli and fresh ginger. These offerings will not only be available at the Weighbridge Brewhouse, but also at the Swindon CAMRA Beer Festival, a short stroll away at the STEAM Museum.

HOP KETTLE

Don't miss the new beers from the Hop Kettle (brewed at the Red Lion Inn, Cricklade). Last year's Danish Pastry was the first to sell-out at the 2013 Swindon Beer Festival and was joint runner-up in the voting for the beer of the festival.

This year look out for a toasted coconut porter (unnamed at the time of going to press) (abv around 7.0%) and Dubbel Entendre (abv 8.3%) a Belgian style beer, plus a barrel aged heather/honey beer (abv 7.8%) All 3 beers should be featuring at the Swindon beer festival.

YOUR BREWERY NOT FEATURED?

Keep the beer drinkers' of Swindon informed of what's in your mash tun by emailing editor@swindoncamra.org.uk noting that the Rising Tun is published quarterly (see publication dates on page 2).

