

Æ|RISING TUN

Spring 2018 | Issue 120

“CAMRA MEMBERS SAY NO TO SUPPORTING LAGER AND KEG BEER”

INSIDE:

- Meet Alex Arkell from Arkell's Brewery
- CAMRA On Tour
- Disappeared Pubs - The George, Swindon



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

From the Editor...

Don't you just love this time of year? Almost without noticing trees, drab and forlorn take on a soft green hue, buds and new shoots appear almost unnoticeably on shrubs, plants and hedgerows, and it's impossible to feel anything but optimism and delight after a series of cold, wet and thoroughly miserable months. As I write this on a beautiful April day, it is the first time I've really seen decent sunshine since probably September 2017?... at least on these shores!

And for us beer lovers it's not just our surroundings that light up. The brewers get into step too with their terrific range of Spring Real Ales, those light, citrusy, sparkling beverages with just about the right amount of hops at the end. Good ones I'm looking forward to this year are Fullers 'Spring Sprinter', Wadworths 'Epic Brew', St Austell 'Spring Fever', and the perennial Hop Back 'Citra'.

Light evenings provide a renewed incentive to get out now to some of the terrific destination pubs that we have remaining around us within Wiltshire downland and the upper reaches of the Thames Valley. Us old 'uns of course remember some of the lost pubs, we as kids used to enjoy. The Goddard Arms at Cliffe Pypard run by the legendary Terry Court, the Shepherds Rest at Foxhill beloved of our late Chairman David Backhouse, and the Old Inn at Minety, one of my particular favourites deliberately run down and closed by the owners. But hey there's still plenty of choice. You could make your way to Coleshill where the 'Radnor Arms' boasts its own microbrewery, or pop across to the 'Crown' in Lechlade whose Halfpenny Brewery guarantees a fresh pint every time. If you fancy going south then there's Ray Penny's 'Crown and Anchor' in Ramsbury, the splendid 'Swan' at Wilton, near Marlborough or A.P.Mc Coy's 'Outside Chance' at Manton. You could follow the A4 to the glorious, thatched 'Wagon and Horses' at Beckhampton, where Wadworths Epic Brew may already be on the bar!

Finally if you're in the driving seat, why not take a container so is when you get back you can sample a couple of perfect pints in the comfort of the conservatory, without being forced to stomach the gassy, bottled stuff so loved by the supermarkets.

Cheers!

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:

Tuesday 8th May

Haydon Wick Club, 10 Blunsdon Road,
Swindon, SN25 1JD

Wednesday 12th June

The Angel, High Street, Wootton Bassett, SN4 7AQ

Wednesday 11th July

The Swan, Wilton, near Marlborough, SN8 3SS

Tuesday 7th August

The Harrow, High Street, Wanborough SN4 0AE

JOKEs

Did you hear about the flasher who was contemplating retirement? ... in the end he decided to stick it out for one more year

Beer At Home

Collette from the Box Steam Brewery called me just before this publication went to print, to tell me they had introduced two new stunning summer beers 'Pony Truck', a 3.8 abv pale ale with juicy peach flavours and the hoppy bitterness, and 'Steam Town', which Box call a transatlantic IPA at 5.2% ABV. For this they use Mandarina Bavarian hops to give aroma and flavour and the malt is crystal, which provides good balance. Box are an award winning business, the recent incarnation of which started in 2004, although the site in Bath which housed the original Box Steam Brewery was established in 1920's, and as is the way of things, is now luxury apartments.

The present brewery is now run by the Roberts family who own the Cross Guns pub at Avoncliffe, near Box, which I can tell you from experience is not the easiest to locate but definitely worth the search!



In 2011 they moved the brewing to a new facility in Trowbridge and times are good with Tunnel Vision and Piston Broke being the kind of clips us ale drinkers would be traditionally used to seeing on the bar.

And what of the new offer?? ... well rather than just my opinion I thought I'd take it along to the committee meeting in April and let everyone have a taste. The general consensus was that Pony Truck up was just that bit too fruity and too sweet, and most committee preferred the 5.2 full bodied IPA. Packed in 300 mil bottles and kegs, this is their first foray into the craft beer market, and I have to say, up to some of the patchy avalanche of craft beer now on the market, the 5.2 IPA is not at all bad.

ED

JOKes

We have a saying in Wales, "You can take the girl out of Barry but you can't take
ahh perhaps it was Bognor?....



At a stormy AGM in Coventry members voted to reject a far reaching attempts to widen our remit by supporting lager for the first time.

Members will know that there has been a long running revitalisation project which concluded that the constitution should be changed to engage with all beer drinkers irrespective of what they choose to drink. This would have included support for lager and craft beer in addition to ale and ciders.

There were quite naturally fears that if this motion was passed, then thousands of traditional members, who believed this would change the entire CAMRA ethos, could have sought to begin rival organisations.

I kind of agree with MP Greg Mulholland who said that if this amendment had been agreed, we would not be campaigning for anything other than a vague "we like any old nice beer and cider". It would have clearly undermined and weakened the legendary work of branches trying to save pubs from greedy developers, supermarkets and Pubs Cos.

Other modifications to the Campaign objectives were approved including formal support for cider and perry for the first time, moves to promote and protect pubs and clubs as social centres and a co commitment to increase the recognition of the benefits of responsible, moderate, social drinking.

It always seemed to me to be bizarre that in a headlong rush to attract younger members, we were prepared to even contemplate supporting a brewing sector that was responsible for almost wiping out British artisan brewing skills for all time.

Business as usual on the real ale front can only be Good News, and if there are any lingering doubts, the clue is in the title ... CAMRA!

Ed



CAMRA members visit the fine Five Bells at Royal Wootton Bassett in April to present landlords Simon and Becci Cole with the coveted "Pub of the Year" title

Good Beer... Belgium Style

The eighth edition of the 'Belgian Good Beer Guide' is an update of the original 1992 work and lists over 1000 beers and 800 venues in which to find them.

Initially it seemed a bit odd to me that the Campaign is promoting beer from overseas rather than focusing on our own ale breweries, but beer tourism is big business, popular across Belgium, and it seems many of our followers regularly take part.

Buy this and you will end up with 365 pages packed with fascinating detail, produced by Joe Stange and Tim Webb, aficionados clearly in love with Belgian brews. Beautifully written with stunning illustrations and humorous content, it also includes a brief treatise on Belgian pub food. The book describes how the Belgian market has changed after the smoking ban and how it is dealing with rising rents and a bit like in the UK, the age of the more specialist, smaller outlets seems to have dawned.

Finally there is a list of the more than 40 beer festivals, dotted around towns and villages all across Belgium at all different times of year, so if you are thinking of making the trip, this is an essential handbook which tells the full story and will guide you to the very best places.



FESTIVALS ROUND UP

MAY 11/12TH

Christchurch Beer Festival in the Church Swindon. www.oldtownbeerfestival.com
Tickets from Magnum Wines in Wood Street

19/20TH

Spring Ale and Steam Weekend Gloucester and Warwick Railway (from Cheltenham Racecourse)

26/27/28TH

Swindon and Cricklade Railway, Tadpole Lane Beer and Cider festival
www.swindon-cricklade-railway.org

JUNE 15/16TH

Salisbury Beerex at Salisbury Arts Centre (SUPPORT SALISBURY!)
www.salisburyartscentre.co.uk

20TH

Worlds End Summer Solstice Fest Crown Inn, Pewsey, Wilts

23RD

Covingham Beer Festival, St Pauls Church
www.dorcanchurch.org.uk

29/30/1ST

Red Lion Cricklade Summer Festival
www.theredlioncricklade.co.uk

JULY 6/7/8TH

Beer on the Wye, Hereford
www.beeronthewye.org.uk

20/22ND

42nd Cotswold Festival, Postlip Hill, near Winchcombe. www.cotswoldbf.camra.org

26/27TH

Maidenhead Festival, Desborough College
www.mbcf.camra.org.uk

AND DON'T FORGET THE BIG ONE IN OCTOBER!

SWANNING AROUND

Welcome Michele... A Breath of Fresh Air

Just Swanning Around “you take the High Road and I'll take the 66 Bus”

I think the 66 Express Bus Service to Oxford is a great piece of engineering. Not only is it comfortable and regular, it stops right across the road from the Swan Pub in the centre of Faringdon. The Swan of course has a microbrewery where Andy and Liz can be found at work brewing Folly Ale at 4% ABV, a copper coloured bitter, PGA also 4% and an amber bitter, and Lord Berners, 4%, named after the man who built the folly tower in Faringdon.



The Swan was built around 1848 when the railway arrived in Faringdon but this was closed in the 1960's although one of the station buildings survives as a nursery.

The pub serves its beer well in a relaxed environment decorated with real hops and with four of its old pub signs displayed in the rear room, each depicting a swan. Two of these date from the time when the pub was owned by Salisbury brewer Gibbs Mew.

Very much a dog friendly pub, Andy thinks a pub is not really complete without a dog in the corner ... so they happily provide a bowl to wet the dog's whistle.

If you fancy brewing your own ale, then there is a plan to begin a series of brewing days for those who are interested. Information can be found on their website www.swanfaringdon.co.uk

With six real ale hand pumps and a regularly changing choice, some splendid real ciders, over 30 premium gins, a selection of craft beers and good wines and proseccos, I'd say the Swan is the perfect pub in which to while away quality time with friends, or indeed for Swindonians looking for a modest awayday. They're open Monday to Friday 12 until 2pm and Saturday and Sunday from 12.00 throughout the rest of the day. Definitely worth a try.

Great to welcome Michele Rostami to the Harrow in Wanborough. This is a pub with a chequered history in the recent past and I for one have never been able to understand why it is not more popular? Michelle left Liverpool in her 30s and after 10 years in the Midlands, Liverpool's loss has been our gain for the last 18 years!



The most impressive thing is as you walk through the door, is not the bars antique ambience but a cool, inviting Timothy Taylor 'Landlord' as a house beer, and for an expensive beer it sold at a realistic price. Currently she has one more guest alongside it but is planning a second if real ale sales justify the third pump. The Harrow opens at 11.30 each day. In the week she takes a break at 3 o'clock before the evening trade begins but at weekends, goes on til late.

Michele is working on a new menu for the Spring and Summer but this will continue to include well-known pub classics. The kitchen remains under the supervision of the well-established head chef Ian Jefferies. If you do manage one over the eight then there are three guests cosy letting rooms, in this 18th-century building. Michelle is no stranger to Wanborough because before the Harrow, she was Assistant Manager at the Cross Keys, had been at the Brewers and before that spent some long time at the Cotswold Water Park bar and kitchen.

I like Michele. She has the right ideas about what a pub needs to be and whilst it might take time to rebuild the reputation of the Harrow, I think she's exactly the right person to do it. Good luck! (Now is that effusive enough for another Timothy Taylors!!)

Ed

PUB NEWS...

Swindon and North Wiltshire Branch

Mark and Rachel Davies taken over one of Arkells busiest pubs, the delightful **Riverside on the Thames at Lechlade**. Both are experienced in the leisure sector and are excited about the potential. **The Inn with the Well at Ogbourne St George** together with nine letting rooms could be yours at the knockdown price of £625,000. **The Horseshoe Inn at Mildenhall** is on the market for £695,000. Wadsworth say an offer from a buyer with the licence intact, is on the table for the **Three Horseshoes at Stib Green**. It is presently closed but could continue as a pub. Watch this space. **The Shears Inn at Collingborn Ducis** is seeking a new tenant. The **Ship at Upavon** is seeking a new tenant also. **The Greyhound in Faringdon Road, Swindon** is still on the market but you'll need to dig deep at a few coppers less than £1 million. The **Crown at Broad Hinton** has new tenants starting at the end of the month. The rather lovely Claire and Tony Edwards have decided to move on and are at Great Cheverill ... I for one wish them both good health and a great future. **Rudis** night-time bar in the town centre has undergone a complete refurbishment. The former **Locomotive** in the town centre is now to be known as the **Waiting Room** with two real ales as well as a range of craft beer. Planned refurbishment at the **Pig on the Hill** has been postponed and is likely to take place towards the autumn. The **Queen's Tap** opposite the station is looking for a new tenant. The **White Hart at Burbage** appears on Rightmove website at a cool £480,000. The **Rolleston Arms** had an open day for potential new landlords in late March and Enterprise Inns (now flashily called EI) are keen to continue it under more stable leadership it, or at least that's what we are told. Finally the sale of the **White Hart at Winterbourne Bassett** is now completed and under its new name the **Winterbourne Community Pub** or even just the **Winterbourne**, it should be opening its doors in the summer and looks like being a success.

JOKes

I always suffered from a whiplash injury,
anyway three years ago I had a neck brace
fitted and you know... I've never looked back..

WHEN PEOPLE TELL YOU IT CANNOT BE DONE, ITS NOT POSSIBLE...

Work continues apace at Swindon area's first real community owned pub, the Winterbourne at Winterbourne Bassett, a little south of Wroughton, on the A361. You may recall that the community bought this pub from Wadsworth's who decided it didn't fit their criteria any longer. Urgent subscriptions to the company from 51 concerned locals were supplemented by a grant from the Plunkett Foundation and the loan from the Cooperative and Community Finance Organisation.



The pub is being truly transformed inside and out. Already a mostly new roof is completely watertight. In every bit of spare time the community has, they are cleaning down, remodelling, working on the grounds, painting throughout, new kitchen, new heating system etc,etc. What I love about this is the

way the project bring communities together, gets them working alongside other communities, and once a real stake is driven down provide a connection for all time and save brilliant village pubs from what would otherwise be just another block of flats with modern brick boxes crammed around it and spread over every inch of any car park. Our Village pub ... **When it's gone its gone!**

CAMRA ON TOUR!!

Never quite sure whether the Romans named Cirencester after Lucy and Collins terrific microbrewery or whether Lucy and Colin nicked the name the Romans had come up with?... Whatever the truth (and it was probably the latter) they were superb hosts to our April CAMRA day out.



After a bit of a trying time for the old liver the night before, yours truly joined the party at the Corinium Brewery, which is now located in Lord Bathurst's old kennels on the Cirencester estate. The away day began in Stroud, continued at the Corinium, and ended up at the Red Lion in Cricklade, although judging by one or two of them as they left Cirencester, I'm not at all sure they'll have remembered Tom Gee's splendid High Street pub! (another 10 real ales on the bar!) Corinium Ales started in a garage, when Lucy and Colin fell across circumstances that enabled them to start in a small way to follow their lives ambition. The brewery is now six years old and is moved from the modest 11 m² garage to nicely restored stone units in the old kennels... theirs rather appropriately called 'the Doghouse'.

I enjoyed talking to them and especially admired their enthusiasm and ambition to grow the business well beyond its present constraints. We were enveloped with some really good beers. Corinium Gold 4.2 ABV, a traditional golden ale, the earthy Centurions Stout 4.7, Ale Caesar (geddit) a genuine 5% IPA and my favourite, Boadicea Gold adopting only English hops and brewing out at 4.7 ABV also. There was also Unites Exotic which was an unfinned beer... and finally a remarkable, never to be forgotten vanilla brew which actually originated from a competition in the Gloucester Brewhouse kitchen. For visitors they stock craft cider from Fairford and Scrumpy from Beard and Sabre.

It was not only great company but the early Spring sunshine made it a very memorable day out. You should really think about joining us on our next adventure!

Ed

Brewery News

Arkells... the latest seasonal beer at 4% ABV is 'Steam Powered' which was last brewed two years ago for the GWR 175 celebrations. Ironically a barrel got in by the Manor Pub landlord for a CAMRA committee meeting there, literally raced off the bar the previous evening, leaving us with a meagre 7 pints between 25 of us! Looking back on this year Arkells sales are up in all areas, which is good news. The next special arriving on the bars is 'Show boater@' which begins on 28th May and runs through to July.

Hop Kettle Cricklade... A few new experimental brews are underway on their mini kit with Matthew brewing a batch of 'Morello Brown', a brown ale infused with Morello cherries, a trial brew pale ale with lime and hibiscus flowers is fermenting and the experimental 'Black Saison' is now ready and will be available at the Brewery Tap.

Hop Kettle Swindon... the latest batch of 'Flapjack Marmalade' is now in cask and keg and will be ready very soon for drinking, as will the latest 'Coffee Pale' brewed with ground espresso beans. The next house beer for Hop Kettle Swindon is a well hopped 'New Zealand Pale Ale' with Pacific Jade, Wai-iti & Motueka hops and brewing out at 3.7% ABV. The aim is to be a full tasting beer for a low ABV, by the use of naked oat malt to enhance flavour.

Ramsbury... They will send a new beer 'Triple Hop' at 4.4 ABV to the Great British Beer Festival in August. This is a golden ale with a Citra hop finish but also uses Golding's and Cileia hops in the process. The beer made an appearance at the Wanborough Festival in April along with Ramsbury's 'Chalk Stream' and both ales sold out. Ramsbury are about to start brewing for three months to supply 'Ramsbury Gold' to Wetherspoon's nationally. They also have a plan for a mango beer in the summer and chocolate milk stout for Christmas.

Three Castles... This brewery is proposing a new beer 'Summer Haze' at 4.6% ABV for the Great British Beer Festival. This is a strong flavoured and easy drinking ale with intense grapefruit and tropical fruit flavours in the finish and they hope will be nominated. It is undefined and unfiltered as a result has a natural haze in the glass. They were very much involved in the Wanborough Festival, and as well as procuring all the brews they specifically developed 'Tiddly Dyke' a 4.8% ABV golden fruity and grapefruit, 'Bunny Hop' at 4.2%, blonde, hoppy and fruity and 'Tanked Up' at 5%, an award-winning strong copper ale. All of these ales proved extremely popular the casks were soon empty! For the old town Festival the brewery will produce 'Black Tip' a 4.4% Porter and 'Orange Tip' a full-bodied 5.5 % IPA.

Weighbridge... 'The GWR Mild', a 4% ABV has been added in the regular brew calendar.

Worlds End... They are currently brewing 'Gurt' at 4.3% ABV and 'Mesoic' brewing out at just 3.8%. They will be having a summer solstice beer festival starting on Wednesday, 21 June and may have a bottled ale event before this.

Your Local Host... Get to Know Them



"Sorry, only 3B's Sir" ... is not a phrase you will hear in today's Arkells pubs. Even the most disconnected beer enthusiast cannot fail to have noticed the beer revolution which Alex Arkell has championed since he assumed the role of Head Brewer. A very busy guy, I was delighted to get a few minutes of his day, to try to discover more about the real 'AA'

Alongside brewing the beer everyday there are a raft of other processes to be done such as cleaning casks, racking beer into the barrels, running the bottle line, filling kegs... there is never nothing to do! In the afternoons I'll often visit the pubs and chat to landlords, making sure our beer is being looked after properly. My day may then finish at 6ish, although every few weeks I host evening talks or tastings in the brewery or out in the pubs. I love doing this as it's a great way to get feedback on our beers.

Are you big on exercise, at the gym every night?

I go running occasionally.... mainly to keep the old beer belly at bay!

If you weren't doing the job you have now, what would you do and why?

Having been a brewer now, I don't think I could ever do anything else that would bring so much variety in my days and reward in producing a tangible product that people seem to enjoy.

Are you much into cars? A petrol head? What do you drive?

I drive a VW Amarok. It's a truck which is ideal for moving barrels and sacks about. I love it, although I think it's built for the US market as most parking bays are too small.

What was the best thing that happened to you in life?

Easy this... having two gorgeous little boys, every day I look forward to getting home to see them.

If I gave you a soap box outside the Moonrakers (apart from it being a great pub) what would you rant on about?

Dangerous question... I studied philosophy at university so can waffle on for hours about any old inane subject.

When did you start out in your career and why?

I began at the Eagle Tavern, Oxford. The pub belongs to my family brewery and I became the pub's tenant landlord at aged 23, straight from University. Despite being a member of a brewing family, I wanted practical experience and didn't ask for any family favours. The brewery has always been open-minded about giving opportunities to young landlords and I was no different. We renamed the pub the Rusty Bicycle and worked day and night, seven days a week, employing almost no-one else, to establish what is now a very successful east Oxford pub. Seeing people's enjoyment of the selection of beers we offered inspired me to learn more about brewing so I went to work at Fullers in London for a brief period and also at Donnington Brewery, based at Stow on the Wold. I then took a Master Brewing course in Chicago and Munich over a year and came back fully qualified. It was then that I started work in the Brewhouse.

Tell me about your typical day?

We start brewing early, around 6.30am. On a normal day I oversee the brewing which is done by our longstanding team of fantastic brewers. Our brewing is more manual than most others so there are always jobs to be done. When one of our brewers is off, I'll be in first thing to mill and mash the beer myself.

Wanborough Beer Festival

How do you like to spend your time off?

Without any doubt, family and friends, I love being with both.

What's the best bit about the job... about being Swindon's premier brewmaster?

I love the variety. One day I can be mashing in first thing, the next a board meeting discussing pub developments, giving talks on beer, traveling to other breweries to learn and meet other brewers or visiting farms to inspect the harvest. Every day is completely different.

Tell me what sets your business apart from the other breweries?

What we do is a true family business right through, from Arkell's here at Kingsdown to the many other multi-generational families that work with us in the brewery or out selling our beer in the pubs.

What would you be doing right now if I hadn't turned up today?

Probably sampling our new crop of Saaz hops that have recently come in. We have just used this in our Malthouse lager and we need to sign the beer off as tasting as delicious as normal.

Which words and phrases do you think you sometimes over use?

Mmm perhaps "....another wet day?"

And on that note as I left, the heavens opened. It's rare today to find a company that values people, takes pride in tradition and builds a business for the long-term rather than 'cashing in' immediately as strippers come knocking. In this respect they don't seem to get the credit they deserve. Arkells routinely turn away such advances and in doing so protect our community's more marginal pubs, provide local employment and hugely boost the local economy... oh and in the process continue to brew some delicious ales under Alex's leadership. If I sound impressed, it's because I was.

The Wanborough Beer Festival, part organized by Swindon CAMRA stalwarts Mike Thompson and Barry Hillier, turned

out to be a great success. The inaugural fest was dreamed up by four drinking buddies including the village vicar the Rev. Bill O'Connell. Whilst the final numbers are not yet in, the expectation is that £5000 pounds may have been raised towards improving the boiler and heating system at Wanborough Church. One feature was the sponsorship of the different beers by local businesses. Undertakers Pearce Funeral Services rechristened Kent's Southern Cross Pale Ale with the somewhat profetic 'Last Orders'. Barnes Coaches renamed a Cheltenham brew 'Barnes Buster' and Monarch Roofing selected 'One More for the Slate' for their chosen ale. Not to be outdone on the cider side, Jens Elegant Nails took a rather splendid strawberry cider and rebadged it, yes, you've guessed it... 'Jens Nailed It'. Everyone involved, including the venue landlord of the New Calley Arms John Beedon, were so pleased with the day, they are already thinking



The Carter's Rest, Wroughton

Josh Lee, landlord of The Carter's Rest in Wroughton presents regular Chris James with his prize, a bottle of Elderflower Vodka. The Carter's Rest was among several Pubs that had prize draws to win bottles of Ramsbury Liqueurs of Gin or Vodka. Customers had a card stamped when they bought a pint of Ramsbury's 'Grand Slam', then a card filled with 5 stamps was entered into the Prize Draw.



DISAPPEARED PUBS

**THE GEORGE, 28
EASTCOTT HILL, SWINDON
1830 TO 2011**



The earliest deed we have is dated 1791 and refers to number twenty eight as a 'cottage' which passes from R.Jones to H.Bristow. In 1810 Bristow sold the freehold to our favourite man of the moment... John Henry Harding Sheppard, who retained ownership until, in 1872, he was called to 'that great publican's rest home in the sky'.

At the time it was on a track which connected Lower Escott Farm (today's Corporation Street/ Manchester Road junction) and Upper Eastcott Farm, close to what is now the Wyvern Theatre, with the retailers of Old Swindon. In addition another route across the Golden Lion Bridge joined the same track not far from where the Town Hall is today.

It was Sheppard who as a maltster and brewer, encouraged George Bishop to open it up as a beerhouse in 1830. There is some debate about the name. It's not clear whether Sheppard suggested to Bishop, previously a cowman and agricultural labourer, that he use own name for the beerhouse equally it could have been with respect to George IV, the reigning monarch at the time.

Bishop seemed to do okay however and stayed running the pub until 1854, fourteen years, when it seems he moved to a new venture, the

brainchild of John Arkell which was the Lamb Inn at Bridge Street, later of course the Lamb and Flag.

He was succeeded by Charles Hurt, another agricultural labourer and cowman. As the GWR developed and new Swindon grew the George, along with neighbour the Duke of Wellington and father up the Globe, were all well-positioned on this increasingly busy route to appeal to thirsty railwaymen living in old Swindon, especially on the way home.

On Sheppard's death, Cripps Brewery of Cirencester bought the George on November 2nd, 1872 from where of course it migrated to the Cirencester Brewery, the successor to E.W Cripps in July 1888. It then joined H.G Simonds in 1937, when all Cirencester Brewery pubs merged with the Reading brewery.

In 1879 Henry Sharp Lewis, a GWR boiler man held the licence and the pub was still being run by his widow Eliza in the 1890s. As Victoria gave way to son Edward, Alfred Webb was 'mine host' at the George.

The George is another example of a great community backstreet pub allowed to decline and die for the want of decent leadership. Sean McClellan recalls great rock 'n' roll nights with

Tony Vernon (he of the thick suede shoes) in the 70s. He told me mother used to park them in the annex and their reward for patience was a hotdog supper from the van outside the old College on the way home! The George also played a full part in local crib and especially in the Simonds house darts leagues.

Simonds merged with Courage in the early 1960s and for a while the pub continued. In fact Courage for all their faults, trained their landlords rather well and treated them with respect and most importantly believed in their pubs. Then came Margaret Thatcher's attempt at creating competition through her Beer Orders and with them the emergence of massive and highly leveraged property companies, who pretended to be pub managers.... yeah right!

In the case of the George it was the useless Enterprise Inns that ran out of interest, having run out of ideas and closed the doors on April 14th 2011.



26-28 July

6th Maidenhead

Beer and Cider

Festival 2018

100+ Beers

Great Food!

20+ Ciders

Live Music

Desborough College, Shoppenhangers Road, Maidenhead SL6 2QB

Open: Thu 12noon - 10pm, Fri/Sat 12noon - 10.30pm.

Admission: £5, £4 with RBWM Advantage Card, £3 CAMRA, all to include Souvenir Glass

 5 mins

 CAMRA FOR REAL ALE

 [www.mbcf.camra.org.uk](https://www.facebook.com/mbcf.camra.org.uk)





 CAMRA FOR REAL ALE



ELITE STAINLESS FABRICATIONS

CHARITY RAFFLE

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★ **A SPECIAL EDITION** ★
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RUNNER UP PRIZE DONATED BY BREWHOUSE AND KITCHEN

Due to popular demand, ESF are bringing back the 60 litre unit!

To celebrate, the first unit will be a special edition, presented to the winner of our charity raffle. All proceeds will be evenly split between Phab Kids and Swindon Down's Syndrome Group.

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DRAW 25.8.18**

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