

# Hereford HOPVINE

The Newsletter of the Herefordshire Branch of CAMRA

Issue No 57

Spring 2015

Free



WILL THIS BE A THING OF THE PAST?  
**HEREFORDSHIRE'S SMALL CIDER**  
PRODUCERS UNDER THREAT



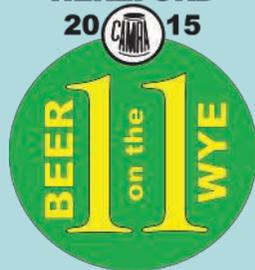
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# LET'S SAVE OUR CIDER-MAKERS!

***A threat from the EU may see the demise of small cider producers across Herefordshire, potentially changing the character of our landscape forever.***



It was obviously good news for our many local cider and perry-makers that the Chancellor reduced the duty on cider and perry by 2% at the recent budget, but unfortunately this has been totally overshadowed by a threat that could mark all but the end for many of them.

CAMRA has launched a new campaign to support small cider and perry makers, following an edict from the European Union, which is demanding that the UK Government remove its Excise Duty exemption for small producers.

This will be a complete disaster for the over 50 small cider and perry producers in Herefordshire. Even those who don't gross as much as £10,000 a year could be saddled with tax bills of up to £2,700. Then there is the small matter of the extra bureaucracy that will be involved. Many producers will just choose to give up their centuries-old craft, and just at a time when more and more people are waking up to the pleasures of local ciders and perries.

Herefordshire CAMRA fully supports our small local cider and perry producers, as is evidenced by the fact we uniquely showcase over a hundred of their ciders and perries each year at our *Beer on the Wye* festival. And we are not alone with our support – more and more local pubs are now stocking their products. The Beer in Hand and King's Fee in Hereford and, most recently, the Green Dragon at Bishops Frome have all been crowned Herefordshire *Cider Pub of Year* because they sell these ciders and perries. Is this burgeoning renaissance really going to be killed off?

## **Herefordshire without its small orchards? A sad future.**

If we lose our small producers, then we are going to see a discernible change to the rural character of the county of Herefordshire too, as cider mills close and ancient apple and pear orchards are grubbed up. Mark Haslam for Herefordshire CAMRA says:

"We must fight this proposal tooth and nail. At a time when people are increasingly turning to local producers for quality drink and food of all sorts, we are now in danger of killing off an entire artisan movement of cider and perry producers. And in doing so, a little bit of Herefordshire will die with them. We must resist this proposal to the end."

Ever since alcohol duty was introduced there has been an exemption in place to help small cider producers, for whom making cider is an integral part of rural culture. About 80% of Britain's cider market falls into this category, which is made up of over 500 individual producers across the UK. While their output levels may be small, they are integral to a great British tradition and help support a varied pub culture and tourism.



CAMRA are now working hard to persuade the Government to reject this request and have written letters to the Treasury and the European Commission about the issue. We are also lobbying MPs to urge the Government to put UK cider producers and consumers first.

Please support this important campaign. Sign the petition "***protect small cider producers***" by going online at: [www.herefordcamra.org.uk](http://www.herefordcamra.org.uk) and following the link

## LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

### HEREFORD

Previously-announced plans to recruit extra staff are not now being pursued, and owner, Jim Kenyon, brewing once a week for the Victory and regular club outlets. He says he is also happy to supply anyone who requests his beers, but is not actively seeking to expand. Beers swaps are continuing, most recently with Wentworth Brewery of Sheffield.

Aurora Weissbeer at 5.0% ABV has reappeared recently in addition to the four main brews.

### JONES THE BREWER

As part of the development and expansion of their beer range, the brewery continues to create small trial batches of new beers. The latest, a golden-honey coloured bitter called The Creature, has undergone some minor recipe adjustments and has increased to 4.5% ABV. It features Challenger and Target hops, along with pale and crystal malts, which together give pine/cedar flavours that mix with of citrus fruit, tropical high notes, and caramel undertones. It is currently available, along with the rest of the

range, in bottle-conditioned form direct from the brewery (Tel: 07010 717232) or from the new *Beer Revolution* shop in Hay-on-Wye.

Another beer in the test stages is a yet unnamed 7% IPA that was due to receive its first bottling run during March. If readers would like Jones's beers in their local pubs or beer outlets, then please call the brewery and let them know.

### LEDBURY

The recent brewery expansion and the building of a new cool room and dry store have been completed. Sales of the core beers (Ledbury Gold, Bitter and Dark) continue to grow via an increasing number of local pubs. In addition, after a year of sales to London pubs, a number of permanent and regular guest outlets have been established.

There are plans for a new brew, which will be a 4.5% golden ale brewed with locally-grown Bramling Cross hops. Test brews start in April.

### MAYFIELDS SWANSONG

Aunty Myrtles is no more. In mid-March, Mayfields brewed its last ever beer at its base on the Croft Industrial Estate in Leominster. Brewer and owner, Adam Smith, is needed to help run the increasingly-busy family business of making and fitting children's outdoor play areas - and so he has reluctantly decided to call it a day.

On the 1st April all the brewery equipment was due to be stripped out and removed to Braintree in Essex, following its sale to a new start-up brewery down there. This will be the end to brewing in Leominster (for the time-being), but at least Mayfields Brewery leaves a successful brewing legacy. Herefordshire CAMRA wishes Adam well and thanks him for his support over the years.

### MULBERRY DUCK

Beers are available on a semi-regular basis at the Golden Cross, Sutton St Nicholas; the Salutation at Weobley; the Bells at Almeley, and more occasionally at the Tram Inn, Eardisley.

### ODYSSEY

The recipes of two beers have now been perfected. The flagship Crowd Control is a 6% massively-hopped American IPA, and Nirvana is a west coast American Pale ale at 5.4%.

Syren, the 3.9% ABV the session pale, is now unfiltered and naturally hazy with much better body and taste as a result. Apparently, the mar-

**THE BARRELS**

**HEREFORD'S LOCAL**  
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FULL RANGE OF WYE VALLEY BREWERY BEERS

ket seems surprisingly willing to take unrefined beers, so more can be expected.

Beers in development include Homefront, an IPA at 5.0% ABV with seven different English hops; Little India Pale Ale, a 4.5% ABV session IPA, and two pale ales each at 4.0% ABV - Mo'Nook with Mosaic and Chinook hops and Mo'Mo with Mosaic and Mouteka hops.

Apart from the Beer in Hand, outlets include the Tower Hotel in Talgarth; the Post Office Vaults in Birmingham, and pubs in Bristol and Exeter.

Brewing has been temporarily suspended to enable installation of further a sterile, temperature-controlled enclosure for the fermenters. following problems over the winter, when temperatures proved to be too low to sustain fermentation, resulting in a loss of brews.

**WOBBLY**

Lots of new developments at Wobbly Brewery: the core beers have been revamped and are now of more consistent quality, and are available at several outlets around Herefordshire.

The new limited-run range of *Hopheaded* seasonal beers are selling well, and the brewery is

continuing to brew 2-3 times each week.

Cosmetic improvements to the roof of the brewery building have been done and building work is almost complete, ahead of installing new 30-barrel capacity brewing kit - which will increase overall output considerably.

A regular outlet has been established at the Crown & Sceptre, Ross-on-Wye (see pub news) and brewer Tom Barlow has the taken on the lease of the Hop Bunker pub in Cardiff, which will be selling four Wobbly cask ales.

**WYE VALLEY**

Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout has been awarded Bronze medal in the Dark Beer category at the prestigious *International Brewing Awards 2015*. The judges said the stout was: "well balanced, with good integration of flavours; an excellent beer!"

The brewery also won the award for *Best Green Business* at the SIBA *BeerX 2015* in Sheffield. The presentation was made to Operations Director, Jimmy Swann.

Wye Valley Brewery will be hosting a friendly new Cycle event on Sunday 12th April. This is

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a cycle 'sportive' – a fun, non-competitive route-marked ride. The 56.8-mile 'Full Pint' route, starting and finishing at the brewery in Stoke Lacy, winds its way around quiet Herefordshire lanes, taking in views of the Malvern Hills, Hay Bluff, the Welsh mountains and many of the region's renowned hop farms.

On completion of the ride, entrants can refuel with the help of locally-produced food and drink, and finishers will also receive a bottle of their limited-edition Pedal Pusher ale to celebrate. See [www.WyeValleyBrewery.co.uk/sportive](http://www.WyeValleyBrewery.co.uk/sportive).

Entry costs £15 in advance, or £20 on the day. The ride is open to any rider age 13 and over. All riders under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult, and any riders under 18 must have completed a Parental Consent Form in advance of participating. All riders must wear a helmet.

The brewery has also recently taken possession of a five-barrel capacity pilot brewing plant. The plan is to use this for recipe development and some exclusive new brews including "something extra special" for *Beer on the Wye XI*.

Wye Valley's 30th anniversary falls this year, and will be celebrated at an Open Day to be held at the brewery on Saturday 4th July.

**LUDLOW**

Ludlow Blonde is back and for good - that's the message from the Ludlow brewing team. Last year this trial brew was so successful that the brewery simply ran out of the hops that give it such a distinctive taste. According the team, this was mainly thanks to the enthusiastic uptake by Herefordshire pubs, including the Dog Inn at Ewyas Harold and the Olde Tavern at Kington. This 4.0% ABV brew, laced with Citra and Sladek hops, is now also on sale at Ludlow's brewery tap, the Shed.

But head brewer, Gary Walters, has his mind on other things right now, for Ludlow Brewery is a co-sponsor of the inaugural *Storm the Castle* duathlon (running and cycling) which will happen on April 19th, 2015. Gary is taking part in the event, as he's a keen cyclist and has been training hard over the past few months. He is also involved in the *Ludlow Spring Festival* (8-10th May), and people can catch Gary at the *Meet the Brewer* evening due to be held at Ludlow Castle on Friday 8th May.

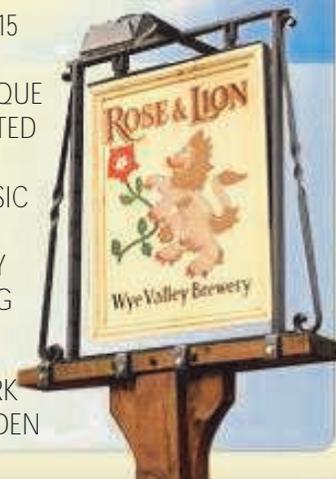
**WOOD'S**

The Wood Brewery celebrates its emerald anniversary (that's 35 years if you didn't know) in 2015, and is planning a series of special 'woody' brews to celebrate. All the beers will be named after trees, the first being Chestnut, which will be on sale at the *Ludlow Spring Festival*. Chestnut is a modern mild, designed with gentle malts and hops and an ABV of 3.5%. Wood's plan at least two more emerald celebration brews during the year.

Wood's MD, Edward Wood, said: "We're delighted to have achieved this milestone and to have developed a series of successful draught and bottled beers that are popular with drinkers all over the Midlands and further afield."

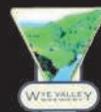
The beer-loving Wood family started brewing traditional beers back in 1980. The brewery is next door to its tap, the Plough Inn in Wis-tan-stow, just north of Craven Arms.

Wood's has become famous for its trademarked Shropshire Lad and Shropshire Lass beers, but it has produced several award-winners in its 35 years. Notable among them are Pot o' Gold, a 4.4% golden bitter which was voted *Best Bitter in Britain* by SIBA.



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## LOCAL PUB NEWS

The **Merton Hotel** on Commercial Road, Hereford has changed hands recently with the Ella family from Humberside now in charge of this long-standing traditional hotel. The bar will continue to stock two guest beers, to be sourced mainly from local breweries (such as Ludlow Brewery), but with a selection from further afield; Hancock's HB is currently on the hand-pump. However, the hotel is willing to consider suggestions from CAMRA members, so do to call in and say hello to the team.

Enjoying fine views up Church Street towards Hereford Cathedral, the **Grapes Tavern** had been on the market for several months with an original price tag around £695,000. However, following an auction held at the pub in March, the Grade II-listed property went under the hammer for a reported £270,000. The historic inn, which dates back to the early seventeenth century, was sold to a Gloucestershire bidder as a going concern. It is understood that no immediate changes are being made either to the Wye Valley beers on offer, nor to the opening times.

Meanwhile, close by in East Street, the **Booth Hall** has closed its doors for the foreseeable future. The *Number Works Pub Company*, which had operated the business decided not to renew its lease with *Enterprise Inns* at the end of February. Martyn Hathaway, who ran the Booth Hall for two years, blamed the closure of the adjacent passageway (linking the pub to the High Town), which effectively robbed the pub of its main entrance. This has remained stubbornly closed since the fire which severely damaged adjoining properties in the High Town back in October 2010.

The *Number Works Pub Company*, operates thirteen other pubs, including the Spread Eagle in King Street and the Wye Inn on Holme Lacy Road in Hereford, and the Full Pitcher in Ledbury. They operated the Booth Hall as a replacement for Old Market Inn, which they were forced to relinquish to allow for the development of the (new) Old Market Shopping Centre. [*Are you following this?* Ed]

Also in the city, the **Moorfields** in Moorfield Street has also recently closed.

The **Victory** in St Owen Street has become the venue for a new social group in Hereford aimed at drawing out more socially-isolated people. *Beer and Books* has been launched to help more introverted people expand their social circle. Using novels as icebreakers, the aim is to help people with potentially similar interests to get conversations started.

The group is supported by *Herefordshire Mind* [the local branch of the national mental health charity] with meetings being held at 7.30pm on alternate Mondays. More information about *Beer and Books* can be found at [facebook.com/beerandbookshereford](https://facebook.com/beerandbookshereford)



Saracen's Head strip-out....but it's not TESCO this time!

Good news can be reported for the **Saracen's Head** in Hereford. The long-closed landmark riverside pub has found a buyer in the shape of brothers Paul, Mark and David Rone - who collectively already own the city's **Bowling Green** pub. Stripping-out the much-neglected interior had already started in earnest by end of March, and it is envisaged to become a free house selling real beer and cider. Plans include bespoke outside furniture for the adjacent river terrace and a high-quality interior fit-out (to include oak floors, fully-glazed patio entrance and state-of-the-art lighting). With an ambitious target opening date of July this year, they are already looking to recruit the right person to take on a genuinely free-of-tie tenancy. Interested parties are invited to contact Paul Rone at:

[paul.rone@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paul.rone@hotmail.co.uk)

The **Three Elms** in Bobblestock, Hereford closed briefly during January for a thorough makeover in contemporary style, with a much lighter feel to the decor. A major re-alignment of the rear entrance way has enabled access to the toilet facilities to be improved. A new management team is led by Adam Godfrey. Two guest beers now complement the regular Greene King offer of IPA, Morland Original Bitter and Old Speckled Hen.

Three charities are hundreds of pounds better off thanks to a series of Bingo nights held at the **Herdsmen** in Widemarsh Street. The bingo sessions organised by June Wright, has raised £1,000 towards the Air Ambulance Service, while councillor Len Tawn was presented with £250 to put towards the Mayor of Hereford's good causes.

JD Wetherspoon, with its pubs in Hereford, Leominster and Ross, has announced reaching the £10m milestone for its chosen charity **CLIC Sargent**. Wetherspoon's has supported the charity, which supports children and young people with cancer, since 2002, and has committed to continue their support until 2020.

A fresh planning application has been made by the owner of the **Cotterell Arms** on Hereford's Cotterell Street, that would see the corner-terrace pub converted into three dwellings. This follows a similar planning application in 2014, that was withdrawn after Herefordshire planners required evidence of its trading position from the owner. By mid-March, following a formal public consultation period of six weeks, there were five letters in support of the proposal and

no objecting letters. In the absence of any local support for the pub, Herefordshire CAMRA didn't object to the proposal.

Just around the corner, the **Plough Inn** on Whitecross Road has re-opened after a brief period of closure. New licensee is Jack Button and the regular beer is St Austell Proper job, which was complemented, when visited, by Wye Valley Butty Bach and Sharps Doom Bar.

Alan and Karen Davies of the **Moon Inn**, Mordiford, have raised £1790 in Aid of the Children's Ward at Hereford Hospital. Notable amongst the events held recently were a live band night and an auction, which raised £640 raised £913 respectively.

The **Royal Oak Hotel** in Ledbury closed for a period during the autumn. The previous tenants of the hotel have bought the adjoining old Masonic Hall and have converted it into a bar called the **Royal Hall**, which is quite independent of the hotel. Currently accessed by a steel fire escape from the Homend, it is open on Tuesday through to Sunday, opening at 12 noon. On Wednesdays they close at 3pm but

**Dorothy Margaret (Maggie) Kite**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Margaret Kite at the age of 68. The former Hereford Landlady passed away suddenly, but peacefully at Singleton Hospital in Swansea on 26th January 2015.

One of six children, Margaret will be remembered for her many years at the Salmon Inn, which she ran with her husband Robert until their retirement in 2012. Prior to this, she was employed by the South Wales Police at Cockett, Swansea.

Many friends from Hereford attended the funeral which took place at Llanelli Crematorium on Thursday, February 12th.

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the rest of the week they are through the day. Regular beers are Sharp's Doombar and Brains Rev James, plus two guest beers.

Subsequently, the redecorated bar and dining room of the **Royal Oak** itself has reopened while further work continues. Wye Valley Butty Bach and HPA are on offer there, plus two guest ales.

The **New Inn at Storridge** on the main A4103 Hereford-Worcester road, actually straddles the county border. This food-led pub less than three miles from Malvern is currently closed and we understand owners, *Admiral Taverns*, are advertising for a new tenant.

Another nearby pub where *Admiral Taverns* will soon be looking for a new tenant is the **Brewers Arms**, just across the Worcestershire border in West Malvern. Long-standing and highly-regarded landlady, Sue Adamson is looking to retire from the strongly community-focused pub in September. The small hillside pub, popular with walkers and locals, has won a number of awards from Worcester CAMRA over the years and was awarded the *Best Pub View in Britain* in 2005. It

normally sells up to six beers, including at least two from Malvern Hills.

In last autumn's *Hopvine* it was reported that the owner of the closed **Fir Tree Inn**, on the A4103 Hereford-Worcester road at Much Cowarne, had been unsuccessful with a planning application to partially convert the premises into flats. In February 2015, a new planning application for full conversion to residential was deposited. Herefordshire CAMRA will be writing to the planners to ask what efforts have been made to first sell the premises as a going concern – we suspect none have.

In the last *Hopvine* the unsatisfactory circumstances at the **Newtown Inn** at Newtown Cross were reported at length. The situation was that neither Herefordshire CAMRA nor the locals, who until recently relied on the pub, were able to ascertain what action (if any) Herefordshire Council were taking two years on from when the present owners had failed to get retrospective planning permission for change of use - this after they had converted the pub into a residential dwelling. The good news is that Herefordshire Council planners have provided CAMRA (and the locals) with evidence that planning enforcement action is in-hand and that a dialogue is ongoing on between themselves and the owners. This is very reassuring. Otherwise, Herefordshire CAMRA are to meet the owners shortly to discuss a number of issues, including what plans they might have to re-open the roadside pub.

The **Stockton Cross** at Kimbolton is not only keeping to the spirit of *LocAle* alive with its choice of real ales - currently Rantipole from Three Tuns; Best Bitter from Hobsons, and two from Wye Valley - but is also sourcing most of its food locally with vegetables and meat from the village, as well as butchers at Richard's Castle and Woofferton. The pub is now planning a *Beer, Cider and Food Fayre* running between 25th and 27th July. In addition to the selection of beers, ciders and perries (drawn from across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire), there will be stalls selling produce from local food producers and live music.

The **Rose and Crown** in Burford (near Tenbury Wells) has announced the dates for its *5th Annual Beer Festival*, which will be held over the weekend of July 10th -12th. Commencing on

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Friday evening, it is planned to have twenty local ales and ciders on offer. Details of the live music is to be finalised.

The bar manager at the Feather's Bar at the historic **Feathers Hotel** on Corve Street, Ludlow, has introduced a 20p discount off a pint of real ale on display of a current CAMRA membership card. The bar currently offers two beers from the Ludlow Brewery and one from Hobsons. There are plans to add another hand-pump in the near future as demand for real ale is increasing at the hotel bar.

For more than twelve years, Robert and Liz Gresko have enjoyed life in an idyllic setting beside the River Lugg. Now, contemplating retirement, they have put their home - the 16th-century **Riverside Inn** at Aymestry - up for sale, along with the 2.84 acres of bucolic beauty that adjoins it. It is now on the market in the hands of specialist licensed agent *Christie & Co*, seeking offers over £625,000.

A spell-binding evening of witches, murder and mayhem was experienced by customers of the community-owned **Crown Inn**, Dilwyn on two

evenings in March, when *The Witches of Dilwyn* written by CAMRA member Tony Hobbs was performed by the *Dilwyn Amateur Dramatic Academy*. The play was the fourth that Tony has specially written for performance at the pub.

The first beer festival to be held at the **Oxford Arms** in Kington this year takes place across the Easter Bank holiday, running from Thursday 2nd April to Tuesday 7th April. Visitors can expect about a dozen locally-brewed real ales, with some local ciders and perries. The second festival will be held between 17th and 23rd June coinciding with the final weekend of the annual *Kington Festival*.

Just across the north-west frontier of Herefordshire, our colleagues in Radnorshire CAMRA are campaigning to save the **Crown Inn** at Walton. The pub is the subject of a planning application deposited in March with Powys County Council, which, if granted, will result in the Crown being converted into a house. More details about the campaign can be obtained from the Radnorshire CAMRA website at: [www.radnorshire.camra.org.uk](http://www.radnorshire.camra.org.uk)

Fortunately no-one was hurt in a severe fire in the kitchen of the **Royal George** at Lingen on March 25th. This remote country pub remains open for drinks.

This year's Dorstone Sloe Gin Competition provided some surprises with last year's *Grand Master* failing to make the podium. Held at the **Pandy Inn** at the end of each January, more than forty entries competed across the three categories, the best entries in each receiving *Top Tipple* or *Highly Commended* rosette for their efforts.

Competition organiser, Zoe McLean topped the scoreboard in both *Nouveau* and *Vintage* sections assuring her the title of *Grand Master of the Sloes*, and the pewter hipflask prize. Despite the mediocre performance by the former title-holder Anna Lonsdale, family honour was restored as husband David was runner-up in the *Nouveau* and third in the *Vintage* sections. It was a 1-2 for children Ellie and Lewis for their Other Fruity Tipples. The 'biohazard' wooden spoon, awarded for the lowest-scoring entry, went to Ian Prior. If Sloe Gin is not your tipple then Three Tuns XXX and Wye Valley Butty Bach are regularly available.

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The **Bridge Inn** at Michaelchurch Escley is a charming rural pub, set out in the far south west of the county, where owner Glyn Bufton has recently acquired an adjacent farmhouse to provide guest accommodation. On the 11th March the latter featured in the Channel 4 TV series 'Four in a Bed', whereby four different accommodation owners visit in turn each others' B & B operations and offer a critique of what they found. Although the group enjoyed an evening meal in the Bridge Inn, they didn't comment on the beer – which is a rather heinous omission on their part, with beers available from Wye Valley.

The local folk scene commentator *Bromyard Sessions* have reported a change to the regular meetings of the *Black Hill Tune Club*. Held at the **Crown** in Longtown, the club now meets fortnightly on first and third Thursdays of each month, starting at 1.30pm.

Following an unannounced visit by an AA inspector, the **Temple Bar** Inn in Ewyas Harold has been awarded a 4-star AA rating for its "smart, well-equipped accommodation". It was also awarded two AA rosettes for its culinary excellence, becoming one of only five restau-

rants in Herefordshire to attain this standard. Despite this, the pub remains in the heart of the local community with darts, pool, and boules teams. It serves Wye Valley HPA and Butty Bach, plus a guest beer from a local brewery.

The **Comet Inn** at Madley is now stocking Hook Norton's Hooky Mild on a regular basis, as regulars have taken to a darker beer at the bar. The mild is a rarity in the county; the deep chestnut-coloured beer packs a surprisingly considerable taste at only 2.8% ABV. The landlady is now also running a changing guest beer.

A Charity Night at the **Yew Tree** in Preston on Wye raised an amazing £2750.32 in aid of the *MS Society*. The pub was packed for the evening, which was book-ended by live music. A mammoth prize draw was supported by numerous local businesses.

The previously *Punch Taverns*-owned **Crown & Sceptre** in Ross-on-Wye has reopened in private ownership. New licensee is Gareth Bythell, who as at his previous pub, the Nell Gwynne in Hereford, is offering beers from Wobbly Brewery. The regular is Wobbly Welder, which is joined at times by another from the range.



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2013

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Website: [www.powledbury.com](http://www.powledbury.com)



## DOUBLE CELEBRATION AT THE NEW INN

In 1980's Fownhope, the Forge & Ferry was the place to go for interesting beer; the Green Man did good food, plus Sam Smith's Bitter, and the New Inn just did Ansell's. Fast forward to 2015, and the Forge & Ferry is just a distant memory; the Green Man has reinvented itself as a trendy eating house, and the New Inn is the thriving village local. Throughout this time, the Gummery



The New Inn team: chef Karen Howells; landlady Sandra Gummery and her son Daniel Teague (far right); with Herefordshire CAMRA chairman, Simon Crowther, holding the certificate.

family have been in charge at the New Inn. Father Les, now 87, took over 53 years ago, and prised the pub from the grip of Ansells around 1990. It was at about that time that he handed over the reins to daughter Sandra, although he is still around to act as licensee when Sandra needs a break. So, it is fitting that our Spring *Pub of the Season* award doubles as a celebration of Sandra's 25 years in charge.

First and foremost the New Inn is a village pub, run for the locals. Good honest home-made pub food, which is offered at lunchtimes during the week attracts customers from further afield, but you really need to be a local to keep in touch with the irregular pattern of food offerings in the evening, which feature

fish and chips, pies, steaks and curry in rotation. Dates for the evenings are advertised at the pub, as they are also for the monthly Sunday roast., and the events are all well-supported and enjoyable.

The *ad hoc* nature of events at the New Inn carries over into jam sessions and quiz evenings which also don't follow any set pattern, but are advertised at the pub, and on the website.

Hobsons Best Bitter has been the staple beer for many years. On the day of the presentation it was complemented by Wye Valley Bitter, thinly disguised as "New Inn Bitter", and Sharp's Doom Bar. The latter two change from time to time, but at least one of them will always be from a local brewery.

The pub consists of a single room with exposed beams divided into more discrete spaces by a central, bare-brick fireplace. It has recently been given a makeover to lighten the decor, but most important is the warmth of the welcome from the locals who maintain a lively banter at the bar. This pub is a credit to Fownhope and worth a visit at any time.

*New Inn, Fownhope, HR1 4PE. Telephone (01432) 860350. Opening hours: 12-3,6-midnight Mon-Fri; 11-midnight Sat; 12-midnight Sun. Meal times: 12-2.30 Mon-Sat; 12-4 Sun (monthly). Website [www.thenewinnfownhope.co.uk](http://www.thenewinnfownhope.co.uk) Nearby bus route: 454*

## ALL CHANGE AT AWARD-WINNING ALMA

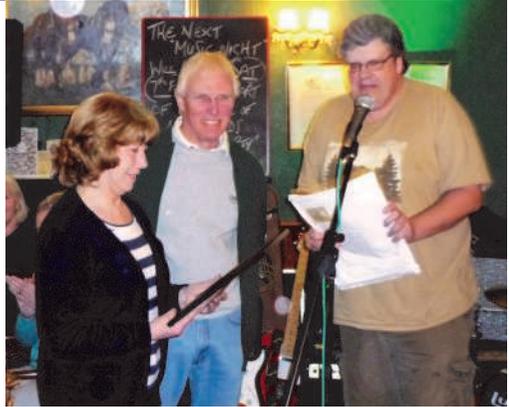
It seemed only fitting, when licensees Graham and Lin Web retired from running the Alma Inn at Linton, that they were presented with a CAMRA certificate: it's something they'd become quite used to in their eighteen years running this popular and successful village inn.

Thus it was on the evening of Saturday the 13th February, a full house of loyal locals and their many friends gathered to cheer them off on their way into a happy and very well-deserved retirement.

The presentation acknowledged and thanked them for their considerable contribution to the pub life of Herefordshire. In those eighteen years, their unique blend of good beer and a welcoming atmosphere in an unashamedly real pub, had netted them the *Herefordshire CAMRA Pub of the*

Year (or Runner-up) title on no less than seven separate occasions. When one considers winning this annual competition precludes a pub's entry the following year, just doing the simple maths shows how often it was recognised. A remarkable achievement by a couple who were always most at ease understating the effort they put into making the Alma the success it was.

They now plan to move to a cottage in Dorset where they will be nearer to their family, but the good news is that they will be back at the Alma Inn for a week in June to help the new owners, Dan & Gemma Evans, organise the annual *Linton Music Festival*.



Linda and Graham Webb, with Mark Haslam (right)

It can be happily reported from an early visit to see the new regime at the Alma, that it's no change, bar a few different pictures on the walls. It's still the same place with great beers in tip-top condition from Butcombe, Malvern Hills and Oakham Breweries, as well as the usual laidback atmosphere. Plans are already well-advanced for this year's *Linton Music Festival*, which comes with a full-size beer festival bolted on. Otherwise, the new owners have promised to bring in any changes gradually, the biggest of which over the coming months will be the provision of pub food.

*Alma Inn, Linton, HR9 7RY: Telephone: (01989) 720355. Open Mon-Fri 6-11; Sat 12-3, 6-11; Sun 12-3, 7-10.30. Website: [www.almainnlinton.co.uk](http://www.almainnlinton.co.uk)*



(above) with Herefordshire CAMRA Chairman Simon Crowther (right), in front of the 'beer wall' carrying the names of some of the pubs more prodigious drinkers.

Runner Up and was the Bridge Inn, a delightCountry Pub of the Year fully situated country pub by the river Monnow at Kentchurch. Receiving the award (right) were licensees, Nick and Andi Phillips.

Both pubs were fully described in the Christmas 2014 edition of the *Hopvine*.

## PUBS OF THE YEAR

The new wave of micro-pubs only reached Hereford in August 2013, but the Beer in Hand in Hereford has rapidly established itself as the city's premier pub for new and unusual beers, and also for local cider and perry. It very quickly achieved recognition for the latter as Herefordshire CAMRA's *Cider Pub of the Year 2013*, and in its first full year was awarded *Pub of the Year 2014*. The pub's founders and owners, Alison and Mitchell Evans, are pictured



## LAMB AND WINDMILL JOIN-UP IN STOKE PRIOR

*Long-closed village inn springs back to life*

Back in the autumn of 2012, when PubCo *Admiral Taverns* placed the Lamb Inn on the market, the locals promptly established a working party with the express aim being to buy the pub on behalf of the community. However, it was ultimately sold by *Admiral Taverns* to a would-be developer, who left it to rot whilst unsuccessfully trying to put housing on the pub's car park.

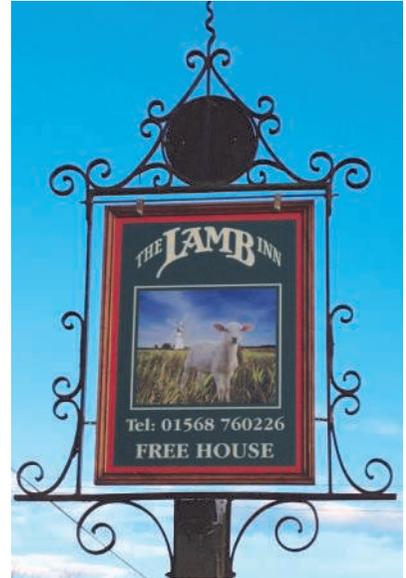
However, happier times are now back under the dynamic new ownership of Terry & Lyn Windmill, thus the reason the new pub sign has the unusual combo of a lamb and a windmill - clever, eh? After a lot of work, the pub opened its doors again just before Christmas last year. And what a fine job has been made of it.

A substantial and high quality refurbishment has totally transformed the place. Gone is the old tat, in has come the original stone-flagged floors along with new oak floors in other areas; all in a single room layout with an intimate alcove in one corner and another corner with leather armchairs - both with wood-burners. A mixture of styles of seating and tables accommodates the diners, while the bar-servery area includes some nice wrought iron-style bar stools.

The food is provided from the house chef who once resided in the kitchen of the superb Three Crowns Inn at Ullingswick in its heyday. The evening menu changes every week, and on the occasion *Hopvine* spies visited, was appropriately offering lamb amongst both the starters and mains alongside some imaginative fish and vegetarian dishes. A cinnamon and nutmeg Herefordshire rice pudding stood out amongst an eclectic selection of desserts. Food is served 6-9 each evening, and 12-3 each Sunday.



Terry Windmill at the new bar of the Lamb Inn



Wye Valley HPA and Butty Bach plus Sharp's Doom Bar are the regular beers, complemented by one guest from local breweries, such as Ludlow.

The effort has also extended into the pub's extensive garden - which wraps round the building and guarantees the Lamb is always going to be family-friendly. How much better it looks with grass, trees and a play area rather than a bland four-bedroom executive dwelling.

The Lamb Inn is definitely one to watch. *Lamb Inn, Stoke Prior,*

*HR6 0NB. Telephone: (01568) 760226. Opening times: Closed Mon; 5-11 Tues-Thurs; 4-11 Fri; 12-midnight Sat; 12-11 Sun Bus stop nearby: Lugg Valley 426. Free Wi-fi*

## LIFE RETURNS TO ANOTHER LIVE & LET LIVE

*A lot of TLC does the business for re-opened village inn*

Not to be confused with the pub of the exact same name on nearby Bringsty Common, the Live & Let Live in Whitbourne has an uncanny number of similarities to its namesake: it survived a change of use planning application; locals worked up at a community buyout, and then, following a prolonged period of closure, the pub finally re-opened back in November 2014. Perhaps the word 'Live' in both pub names instils in them a destiny to be true survivors?

Located a third of a mile off the A44, and close to the Worcestershire border, the Live & Let Live in Whitbourne village is at the heart of its rural community, a community whose 'can-do' credentials are absolutely confirmed by the 'one they did earlier' in the shape of a thriving volunteer-run village shop next door to the pub.

Like with the other Live & Let Live at Bringsty Common, ultimately the community buy-out wasn't necessary, when the ex-*Enterprise Inns* pub was bought in 2014 by Richard Hill and Mandy Webb. And what they have achieved in a few months is to be highly commended.



Richard Hill & Amanda Webb at the bar

Gone forever are the dinosaur 1980s bar fittings and thick pile carpets, in has come contemporary and definitely very cosy. Newly-exposed original timber and red brick tiled floors now feature in a delightful main bar area, that now boasts a fine fireplace rather than a fruit machine as its centre-piece, and a separate fully-refurbished dining room is due to re-open shortly. The garden is looking good too, following a Borneo-style vegetation cull, once again providing splendid views into open countryside. The Live & Let Live is going to be a pub for all seasons.

The owners, new to the trade, have put in a lot of effort - and it shows, but they are keen to point out that it is still work in progress; there is more to come. And it's a real family affair with three daughters helping out, not only with the refurbishment, but behind the bar and in the kitchen too. On the night *Hopvine* spies visited, we were informed that the current menu is temporary and at the moment food is only available Thursday to Saturday nights, but with a mouth-watering selection of Herefordshire grills; some strikingly imaginative mains; basket meals and a proper pudding menu, it already looks the real deal. Mussels and home-made fish pie is hardly your typical pub fayre. And, of course, Sundays are there for roast dinners.

Beers are from Wye Valley (HPA and Butty Bach), along with a changing guest beer, and were top-notch on the date of our call.

This is a village pub that is going places. It is remarkable how this once-neglected *Enterprise Inns* basket case has been transformed and re-invented in just a few months. Yet, there is more on the agenda - with further improvements, plus events and functions planned for when the new restaurant finally opens. If you do venture out to visit the Live & Let Live at Whitbourne, then you need to turn off the A44 Bromyard-Worcester road at the Wheatsheaf Inn - another pub that's worth a visit too.

*Live & Let Live, Whitbourne, WR6 5SP Telephone: (01886) 822276 Opening hours: 4-midnight Mon; 11-midnight Tue-Sat; 12-11 Sun Meal times: 6-9 Thu-Sat; 12-3 Sun*

## AMAZING SPACES CREATED AT WIGMORE OAK

***An architectural masterclass in pub renovation suggests no expense has been spared***



For years the Olde Oak at Wigmore suffered the fate of so many Pubco-owned pubs, with a succession of tenants trying to make something of a dowdy pub that was slipping further and further into disrepair. It finally closed a few years ago and then seemed to be permanently shrouded in scaffolding. The changes that have now been revealed are nothing short of stunning.

Now called the Oak Wigmore, it isn't just the name Olde that has been disre-

ded. Externally the building is barely recognisable. The 1960's pebble dash has been removed, revealing the original timber frame, which had to be partly dismantled and restored beam by beam.

The main entrance is now to the side of the pub on Ford Street, leading to the bar-servey - which has been moved back from its previous position - with a



drinking area around it. At the front is a lounge area, with the original main entrance now just giving access to an enclosed terrace.

A two-storey barn lying at right angles to the rear has also been restored and incorporated into the pub, with its original beams exposed. This, together with rooms to the side forms the dining area. Upstairs are further seating and discrete dining areas plus two en-suite letting rooms.



The whole conversion has been carried out sensitively, and to the highest standard with

the best materials. The result is a fine blend of ancient and very modern. It is very clearly aimed at high-end dining with a quality menu to suit, but licensee Lene Halliday is keen to keep a friendly atmosphere and welcome locals for drinking. To that end, the Oak is family-friendly and dogs are allowed in the front lounge. Real ales are given prominence, with regulars Hobsons Best Bitter, Town Crier and up to three guest beers, two from the Greene King portfolio.

*The Oak Wigmore, Wigmore, HR6 9UJ. Telephone: (01568) 770424. Opening Hours: Mon 6-11; Tues closed (temporarily); Wed-Fri 6-11; Sat 3-11; Sun 12-11. Meals served Wed eve to Sun lunchtime.*

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## DUNKERTONS IN BBC FINAL

Pembridge cider makers, Susie and Ivor Dunkerton have made it to the finals of the BBC Food & Farming Awards 2015. The Dunkertons were pioneers of organic production methods back in the 1980's with a keen interest in the environment and the avoidance of chemicals and pesticides from the outset. They are trail-blazers of real cider production methods and are highly regarded throughout the industry for their achievements and commitment to organic methods.

Susie and Ivor have had to be less hands-on recently owing to ailing health, with ownership of the business transferred to their son Julian so it will be hugely fitting for them to win the category.

The Best Drinks Producer category is open brewers, distillers, wine-makers, juice producers who use carefully sourced ingredients and skill to produce an outstanding drink.

## BEER ON THE WYE IS BACK

Back for its eleventh year, Beer on the Wye returns to its giant riverside marquee at Hereford Rowing Club over the weekend of the **10th-12th July**.

With no increases in admission prices again for 2015, and affordable and well-equipped camping available in the adjacent 'Festival Village', no wonder this bumper event continues to grow bigger and better every year.

With over 120 different cask beers, plus 120 ciders and perries, along with hot food, world beers, live music and a great summer festival atmosphere, it is a 'must-do' event for Herefordshire

This year the Sunday Family Fun Day is improving - with a promise of lots more for the little people to do, and all beers and ciders will be at reduced prices. What more could you ask for to finish off the weekend in relaxing style?

For more details look up the Beer on the Wye at: [www.herefordcamra.org.uk](http://www.herefordcamra.org.uk) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

### Cider Events in and around Herefordshire

The new cider and perry is ready in the Spring, and here is where you can try it:

April 11th – Cider Demo / Fun Day at Newton Court Cider.

April 26th – Blossom Picnic at Colwall Community Orchard.

May 2nd to 4th – Big Apple Blossomtime Festival at Putley.

May 2nd & 3rd – Ross Beer and Cider Festival.

May 8th to 10th – Tredegar House Beer & Cider Festival, Newport.

May 22nd to 25th – Welsh Perry & Cider Festival at Caldicot Castle.

June 6th – Yarkhill Field To Fork Festival.

June 7th – Open Farm Sunday at Westons Cider.

June 12th to 14th – Three Counties Show at Malvern.

June 12th – Broome Farm (Ross Cider Co) host BabaJack (blues band).

July 4th – Bartestree Cider & Beer Festival.

July 10th to 12th – Beer on the Wye, Hereford.

July 12th – Rossini's comic opera L'Italiana in Algeri. Opera in the Barn at Broome Farm (Ross Cider Co).

August 7th to 9th – Down On The Farm at **Gwatkin's Cider, Abbeydore.**

September 4th to 6th – Ross Cider Festival at Broome Farm.

### Your Guide To Herefordshire's Cider Pubs

Pubs selling four or more ciders on handpull or by gravity:

- Beer in Hand, 136 Eign Street, Hereford.
- Green Dragon, Bishops Frome.
- **King's Fee**, 49-53 Commercial Road, Hereford.
- Wellington, 57 Widemarsh Street, Hereford.

And an honourable mention must go to the Yew Tree at Peterstow, now owned by the Ross-on-Wye Cider & Perry Co., with two of their own ciders on draught and a huge range of bottled house and guest ciders.

**Is there a cider event you'd like us to publicise?**

Or have we missed a pub? Contact us at

[hopvine@herefordcamra.org.uk](mailto:hopvine@herefordcamra.org.uk)

## CIDER TAKES OFF AT THE GREEN DRAGON

**Herefordshire CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2015 – Green Dragon, Bishops Frome**

Licensees Zoe Dickinson and Adam Durrant are delighted with their latest award, which follows on from being named *Spring Pub of the Season* in 2014. Adam commented that "It's a privilege to be able to support so many local cidermakers. To be in the middle of cidermaking country, and to win this award, means a lot to us."

The Green Dragon stocks six real ciders at any one time, keeping them cool in the ground floor cellar, pouring them directly into the glass. Their range comprises:

- Abrahall's Lily The Pink
- Bartestree's First Cuckoo
- Henney's Still Cider
- Weston's Country Perry
- Weston's Rosie's Pig

....plus a rotating guest cider.

When Adam and Zoe took over the pub in May 2013, it only sold one real cider. Today's range is all the more impressive when you consider that two, Henney's and Abrahall's, are made in the village of Bishops Frome itself.



Herefordshire CAMRA Cider Representative, David Matthews (L) with licensees Zoe Dickinson and Adam Durrant

*The Green Dragon, Bishops Frome, WR6 5BP. Telephone: (01885) 490607. Open: 5-11.30pm Mon-Thu; 4-11.30pm Fri, 12-11.30pm Sat; 12-4pm, 7-11pm Sun. Food served: Tue-Fri 6-9pm; Sat 12-2, 6-9pm; Sun 12-3pm*

*Gloucester CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013*

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## BATTLE FOR THE BROADLEYS

***A plan to convert a popular and profitable community pub in Hereford into another Co-operative supermarket has been met with shock and anger***

Back in late January the locals at the Broadleys in Hereford learned the devastating news that their pub was to be converted into a Co-operative convenience store. They promptly turned to CAMRA for help, and we were only too glad to assist. First up was to call a public meeting at the inter-war community pub that sits on the junction of Ross Road and Holme Lacy Road. Held at the pub on the evening of the 30th January, it was attended by over 120

### PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY PUBS

Permitted Development is where a person or organisation can affect the use of land without the need for planning consent. Permitted Development makes a lot of sense at one level: it allows households to erect the likes of garages, porches and sheds (within defined limits) without the expense and bureaucracy of having to go to the council for planning permission.

However, Permitted Development Rights can also be used to convert a pub into a shop or certain types of offices, irrespective of the commercial viability of the pub and its community value. Currently, two pubs a week nationally are being converted into supermarkets and convenience stores. In many cases, like with the Broadleys, these are valued and successful undertakings, but they still get converted and in the process the communities get no say. That isn't right.

The Government has consistently resisted the opportunity to close this planning loop-hole. Still today we have the absurd situation where casinos, betting shops, launderettes, funeral parlours, and even payday loan shops enjoy better planning protection than our community pubs. Maybe the expectation of the politicians at Westminster is that once the likes of the Broadleys are lost, that the pub-less locals left behind can instead get a payday loan then gamble everything on 32 Red at their local casino in the forlorn hope of repaying the 3,200% interest charges. Is this really the future local communities want for their children?

people, many of whom were shocked and angry to hear about the proposal.

The meeting had a 'top table' consisting of Jesse Norman MP; local councillor, Paul Rone; long-standing pub-user, David Preedy, and from Herefordshire CAMRA, Mark Haslam. It was explained to the meeting that the owners could (due to a long-standing failure of the planning system) convert the pub into a store without the need for planning consent due to *Permitted Development* rights. In other words, all those who use and rely on the pub would be denied an opportunity to even comment – they would be completely without a voice, just as was the case when Tesco shut down and converted the nearby Gamecock Inn into a Tesco Express back in 2011. It was a case of *déjà vu*.

### Article 4 or bust

However, there was a way forward, and that was to ask Herefordshire Council to invoke something called an *Article 4 Direction*. Basically, this rather arcane-sounding legal measure would require the owners to apply for change-of-use planning consent by affectively 'switching off' the *Permitted Development* rights that would otherwise allow the conversion of the pub without planning consent.

CAMRA wrote to Herefordshire Council on behalf of the meeting to request they make such an *Article 4 Direction* for the Broadleys, and with this provided a substantial body of evidence in support of the request. Without the *Article 4 Direction* it was felt any campaign to save the pub was ultimately going to fail. At the same time, the locals vowed to fight this proposal all the way, and letters and a petition were soon set in train.

The campaign has from the outset attracted substantial publicity. German TV (ARD) filmed events at the January public meeting, and then BBC *Midlands Today* turned up the following week (both TV segments can be viewed at [www.herefordcamra.org.uk](http://www.herefordcamra.org.uk)). The *Hereford Times* have also weighed in with good coverage. The fightback was under way!

## Retired Colonels and dimple pint pots

One budding troll on the *Hereford Times* website opined he didn't think this was "the sort of campaign that CAMRA should get involved in", partly because the pub didn't sell real ale. Well, notwithstanding the fact it does sell real ale, there are numerous good reasons why CAMRA should, and must, get involved in protecting threatened community pubs such as the Broadleys. For a start if CAMRA doesn't stand up for these pubs and the communities that depend on them, then who will? CAMRA will always lend a hand where there is strong local support for a pub and it is trading profitably - as is very definitely the case at the Broadleys. Perhaps our keyboard warrior thinks CAMRA should restrict itself to pub campaigns where the pub is a wisteria-clad 15th Century black-and-white half-timbered country inn; selling fifteen of the finest frothing ales from micro-breweries in dimple pint pots to the likes of bumbling retired colonels, all set amongst a gleaming array of polished horse brasses?

The shocking facts at the Broadleys soon eclipse such implied stereotypes and fully justify CAMRA's full intervention. The Broadleys is without any doubt one of the most important community pubs in the city. Over 150 people regularly participate in various sports and games sides based at the pub, including a full football team; six darts teams; a pool team; a poker club, and a quoits team. It is also a key venue for private parties (including christenings, weddings and wakes) and has other events including live music once a month. The Broadleys is the heartbeat of the local communities that rely on it as a meeting place - especially after the demise of the Gamecock Inn.

## More supermarkets than pubs in South Wye

Already the Broadleys is only one of four pubs left in the city on the south side of the River

Wye. If it were to close then an adult population in excess of 16,000 people would be left with just three pubs: the Wye Inn, Treacle Mine and Vaga Tavern. Many people would have over a mile (in some cases nearly two miles) to get to any pub, let alone one that might be able to replicate the amenities at the Broadleys. This proposal, if implemented, was going to rip the heart and soul out of the local community and hit the most vulnerable the hardest.

And in case you were wondering, there are already five supermarkets within half a mile of the Broadleys, including another Co-op convenience store no more than a five-minute walk away. The over-riding sentiment is that the community needs its pub, not another supermarket.



The Broadleys when built in 1938 [photo courtesy *Logaston Press*]

## Nuremberg Co-op

Letters to the Co-operative Group Chief Executive, Richard Pennycook [*Isn't there a letter 'r' missing from his name?* Ed] have fallen on fallow ground. The caring and sharing Co-op wasn't living up to its name, when the answer from them was essentially: "if we don't do it, then others will." What one might call the Nuremberg defence. "We are only obeying orders!"

However, things took a distinct turn for the better, when on the 26th February - just over two weeks after requesting such action from the council - Herefordshire Council took the courageous step of issuing an *Article 4 Direction* for the Broadleys. Mark Haslam, Campaigns Officer for Herefordshire CAMRA, stated at the time:

## PUB CAMPAIGN: BROADLEYS

“Herefordshire Council are to be commended for taking such decisive action, and for doing it so quickly. Issuing the *Article 4 Direction* does not come without some risk (including compensation claims) and isn’t absolutely guaranteed to be successful. However, what it has done is leveled the playing field - we are not now looking at converting the pub without taking into account issues such as community value. The local community will now have their say. That is only right and proper.”

Collectively we are now on a road less travelled. *Article 4 Directions* are very rare beasts (even more so where applied to pubs), and it remains to be seen if the applicants (on behalf of the Co-op) will appeal the decision. There are probably complex legal arguments to be had down the line. Certainly, we don’t expect them to give up without a fight, but nor too are the locals and CAMRA going to give up. So, interesting times lie ahead.

### 1,000-name petition

Otherwise, the case against any change of use builds by the day. A locals’ petition has already



The Broadleys today

exceeded 1,000 names, and letters of objection include those from Hereford City Council, Hereford Civic Society and various departments within Herefordshire Council. Set against this, there isn’t a single letter or comment in support of this proposal from anyone.

### Schoolchild assessment put to the test

Next up will see the full CAMRA report winging its way to the planners. This will include a traffic



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report. With the planning application came a professional traffic assessment, considered necessary with the location of the Broadleys being on a signalised junction on the A49 trunk road – a very busy road most times of the day. Frankly, this document would struggle to withstand scrutiny by an eight-year-old schoolchild, let alone expect to be taken seriously by a highway engineer. The applicant's traffic consultants are asking us to believe that the Broadleys converted into a Co-operative store would not have an increased level of traffic above that of a pub.

It was decided to put this hypothesis to the test in the field. So on a cold winter's day back in February, a small group of hardy CAMRA volunteers set out to undertake a peak-hour traffic census. The aim was to measure the number of individual vehicle movements in and out of the car park at the nearby Co-op store on Holme Lacy Road and compare those numbers to the movements in an out of the car park of the Broadleys. What we found was very interesting, and certainly at odds with the conclusions in the applicant's traffic report.

### Traffic movements increase 80-fold

If converted as a Co-op store, the number of peak-time vehicle movements at the Broadleys could be expected to rise from the current two per hour to around 160 per hour – that's an 80-fold increase on the present, and equates to a vehicle movement every 23 seconds. Quite how that level of traffic is proposed to interact between a tight ten-space car park and the busy Ross Road, at a point where five parallel lanes of traffic merge at a four-way junction, will be interesting to see. Therefore, perhaps it shouldn't have come as a surprise when in late February the *Highways Agency* (bless 'em) put a hold on the planning application.

The battle to save the Broadleys is far from over yet, and we know the uncaring-unsharing Co-op aren't going to throw in the towel just yet. There'll be an update on this epic struggle between good and evil in the next *Hopvine*, but if you can't wait until then, you can get regular updates on the Herefordshire CAMRA Twitter page.

## MURDERING PUBS THE CO-OP WAY

It probably gives little solace to the locals fighting for the Broadleys that they are not alone with their campaign. Up and down the length of the country other communities are also up in arms as the Co-op plans to convert over 50 local pubs into Co-operative convenience stores.

In late 2013 Marston's Brewery sold 202 of their tenanted pubs to a London-based development company called *NewRiver Retail*. Immediately, Marston's leased them back and continued to operate them as tenanted pub businesses – thus we can safely assume they were, and remain commercially viable. However, at some point in 2014, a hush-hush deal was done with the Co-op, whereby they would take on the leases from *NewRiver Retail* of at least fifty of these pubs with the sole objective being to develop them all into Co-operative convenience stores. Some were to be demolished; others would lose their car parks and (as with the Broadleys) some are being closed and converted – all of them irrespective of whether or not they are viable, and regardless of their value to the community. CAMRA are only now finding out where all these pubs are. It creates a depressing nationwide picture of communities losing their social hearts.

The Co-op has already converted some pubs (such as the Ship at Cuckfield, West Sussex), despite an anguished, but ultimately futile outcry from the pub-users. Other communities fighting for their pubs are putting up a fight - like with the Broadleys - but how does this behaviour on the part of the Co-op fit in with their ethos?

On the Co-op website is set out the Group's "Values and Principles". These include such lofty aspirations as: "openness", "honesty", "caring for others" and "Social responsibility". Quite how the Co-op reconcile the latter principle with what they are doing at the Broadleys and, for that matter, at other pubs is a complete mystery. Further, the Co-op has recently gone on record to state the organisation is proud to be part of the fabric of many communities – but what they are doing in practice is ripping that very same community fabric to pieces. CAMRA has written to the Co-op highlighting these inconsistencies with their values and asking for an explanation, but we aren't holding our breath.

# SMOKE & MIRRORS SEE OFF THE NELL GWYNNE

## City pub granted consent for conversion due to planning loophole

Elsewhere in this *Hopvine* is the story of the Broadleys in Hereford, and how the pub is threatened by the use of so-called Permitted Development rights, whereby an owner can convert a pub into certain alternative uses without the need for planning permission. In the case of the Broadleys, Herefordshire Council have admirably stymied the attempt to use this planning loophole by invoking an *Article 4 Direction*, but with the Nell Gwynne there was no such eleventh hour intervention, and in the final analysis the pub's owner was granted planning consent to convert it into offices. This situation was not helped by the fact this could be achieved via *Permitted Development* rights. So, another pub is lost (and a popular community pub too) without any of the local community being afforded a voice.

This application rankled with CAMRA for a number of reasons. Firstly, some of the claims made in the planning application (and associated documents) were simply untrue, but this seems to have slipped by without any official sanction or comment despite us highlighting them. However, the real issue was that another Hereford city pub has been converted without any attempt being made by the owner to market the premises to another pub operator first – in other words, it should be change of owner before change of use. It is this unwillingness to offer Hereford pubs up for sale as pubs that is bringing about the situation in the city where an independent operator can only get a foothold by converting other premises into a pub. Whilst it is great that we have a converted launderette as our current Herefordshire *Pub of Year*, in the shape of the Beer in Hand, wouldn't it make more sense for independent operators to take over the other so-called "failed" pubs instead? And not every operator or small brewery has the financial backing and wherewithal to do what has been done at the Beer in Hand.

There are big vested interests who have no wish to let the competition into the city – no free enterprise here, please! Then you have developers out to make a fast buck. Sadly both of these groups have been assisted by a Government that, until now, has steadfastly refused to



Ignored, but not forgotten - some of the locals

protect important community pubs by closing a planning loophole that allows for change of use by *Permitted Development* rights. However, this is all about to change, with what is now coming in on the 6th April (see story on page 26).

Local communities and pub-goers need to wake up to the threat that exists from these Permitted Development rights and make use of this new protection. If you don't want your local pub to be converted into another *Tesco Express*, office space or a shop then you need to act now. Getting YOUR valued local pub registered as an *Asset of Community Value (ACV)* will ensure that any changes proposed in the future will always be subject to full planning permission. If you fail to act, then you may end up losing your pub - let's not let the loss of the Nell Gwynne be in vain.

### QUOITS UPDATE

Following our article on quoits in the Autumn Hopvine, we have found two more pubs where quoits is played:

- Hereford - Broadleys
- Kington - Royal Oak

.....and two more where it possibly could be with a bit of persuasion:

- Fownhope - New Inn
- Hereford - Three Elms

Are there more? Please let us know!

[hopvine@herefordcamra.org.uk](mailto:hopvine@herefordcamra.org.uk)

## IT'S SHORT CHANGE FROM THE BIG BOYS, DESPITE 0% INFLATION AND A HAT-TRICK OF BEER DUTY CUTS

### Naughty brewers bank Beer Duty cuts AND crank-up prices

On the surface of it, it was great news again for pub-goers and publicans on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, as the Chancellor, George Osborne, announced another 1p cut in Beer Duty. This is the third budget on the trot where Beer Duty has fallen, and this follows the scrapping of the destructive Beer Duty Escalator back in 2013.

It's easy to forget how grim things were back on the eve of the Budget in 2013. Over a thousand CAMRA members (including a busload from Herefordshire) tripped down to Westminster to lobby their MPs. The future of thousands of pubs and tens of thousands of jobs was at stake, as the so-called Beer Duty Escalator wreaked havoc by increasing the price of beer above the rate of inflation year after year. Beer was in serious danger of becoming a drink only the wealthy elite could afford – well, in our pubs at least. Thankfully, our politicians listened and acted.

Back then the beer and pubs industry was united like never before in the successful fight for a fairer deal on beer tax, but now that consensus has come to an abrupt end, as the big brewers fall over each other in an effort to jump aboard the cash-tastic price-increase gravy train.

It is disappointing, but perhaps not surprising, to see what the big brewers have done with those reductions in Beer Duty. It was probably naïve to expect them to pass on any savings to their customers, but one might have at least hoped for no increases. Not a chance.

### Too high for Zero

In February, just as UK inflation hit the magic 0% figure *Carlsberg* increased their drinks prices between 3.8% and 4.2% and *Enterprise Inns* by 2.9%. In an editorial in the *Morning Advertiser* trade newspaper, editor, Rob Willock, commented that the average uplift in wholesale drinks prices was around 3.0%. He goes on to say: "So, why if we're recognising the much-needed positive affects [of the Duty cuts], are

we risking it by ramping up prices, particularly at a time when the inflationary environment doesn't warrant it?" Quite.

### Mysterious Costs

*Carlsberg* state that the hefty price increases are due to: "rising costs associated with running our business" - whatever that means. They omitted to mention precisely what those rising costs are. It's quite hard to narrow down where these increases are in an economy where the cost of a barrel of oil has more than halved in six months; energy prices are free-falling; hop and barley prices are down due to bumper harvests, and Sterling is currently strong. Moreover, it's a fairly safe bet that their shop floor staff haven't had whopper above-inflation pay increases either. And to top it all off there is the small matter of yet another reduction in Beer Duty. *Carlsberg* might have been more sensible and taken a leaf out of *Heineken's* book, who were happy to not comment [*probably too busy counting their extra profit that day*. Ed]. That just leaves the directors....hmm.

### Fat Cats and fiction

This Big Brewers' Greedathon doesn't need to be bad news for real beer drinkers. We recommend you simply steer away from the over-priced products from the big boys and go local. There are over 1,200 local breweries (twelve in Herefordshire alone) who don't dish out obscene £multi-million share options to fat-cat board members and therefore aren't out to rip you off. However, one does have to have sympathy with those publicans enmeshed in the dark spider's web of the big brewers and Pub-Cos. How are they going to explain increases in beer prices to their customers as the Chancellor announces a third successive cut in Beer Duty? The *Mann Booker* fiction prize awaits the best answer to that question.

#### **BUDGET AT A GLANCE:**

**Beer Duty: 1p off a pint - for the third year running**

**Cider: 2% reduction in Duty**



## WRINGING THE CHANGES: GOVERNMENT CLOSES PLANNING LOOPHOLE...RELUCTANTLY

***The threat of losing a House of Commons vote provided an opportunity to wring a concession out of the Government – one that will now give more communities a voice as to what happens to their local pub.***

Back on the 26th January 2015, the Government was in serious danger of losing a *House of Commons* vote on the *Infrastructure Bill* that was at the time passing through Parliament. A cross-party group of three pro-pub MPs had tabled an amendment to the Bill, that had it been successful, would have closed a long-standing planning loophole that allows pubs to either be converted to shops or offices, or demolished – all without the need for planning consent.

It seems astonishing that the Government has been consistently unwilling to provide the same planning protection to well-run community pubs as it already affords to night clubs, casinos, betting shops, launderettes and even payday loan shops. The matter of *Permitted Development Rights* and the Government's ambivalence where pubs are concerned, is covered elsewhere (on page 20) of this *Hopvine* in relation to what is happening at the Broadleys in Hereford – a real living example of all that is wrong with the current planning legislation. How can you allow a situation to persist where a local community have no voice on what happens to their local pub? It just doesn't make sense.

On the day, the amendment to the *Infrastructure Bill* was defeated by 294 votes to 245 following a lively *House of Commons* debate. However, all wasn't lost, as this result was only achieved by the Government offering a sweetener to its potentially mutinous MPs on the eve of the vote – a morsel designed to dissuade them from voting for the amendment.

The Government hurriedly gave an undertaking that secondary legislation would be brought forward before the end of this parliamentary session (and the General Election) that any pub listed as an *Asset of Community Value* (ACV) would have its *Permitted Development Rights* suspended. Thus planning consent would now be required to convert any pub listed as an ACV

into anything other than a pub. Not the 'big win' hoped for by pub supporters, but definitely a major shift in the right direction. It's just a shame campaigners have had to work so hard just to wring this halfway-house concession out of our esteemed legislators.

The concept of an *Asset of Community Value* (ACV) was introduced as a key part of the *Localism Act* 2011, and affords local communities the opportunity to register with their Local Authority a broad range of community facilities, such as playing fields, open spaces, shops and pubs – although, to date, by far the greatest number of ACV registrations have been pubs. Registration as an ACV has a number of elements, the main one being a 'right to bid' for the asset by the local community if and when it is offered for sale. Up until now, having ACV status carried little or no weight in the planning process. That is all about to change.

On the 12th March 2015 the order paper for the secondary legislation was laid formally before parliament. This is hopefully a mere formality and it is now expected from the 6th April this year that any pub registered as an ACV will enjoy the proper planning protection it deserves. Consequently, after the 6th April it will not be possible to convert any ACV-listed pub into anything else without having full planning consent and after properly consulting with the local community.

It now remains to be seen what transpires. Now that ACV status for a pub affords real tangible planning protection, it will be interesting to see how many local communities come forward to register their pubs as assets. There will be a feature on ACVs and how to register your local in the next (summer) edition of *Hopvine*.

### Short Measure?

**No price list on display?**

**Contact Trading Standards 08454 040506**

[consumeradvice@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:consumeradvice@herefordshire.gov.uk)

## PUBCOs LAST STAND COMES A REAL ALE CROPPER

*A plan to ambush fair deal legislation in The House of Lords comes off the rails*

In the Christmas *Hopvine* it was reported that a defeat for the Government in a *House of Commons* vote would result in embattled PubCo tenants being offered a fairer deal – one where they could potentially buy their beers cheaper on the wholesale beer market, rather than fork out silly inflated prices via their PubCo masters. However, the proposed legislative change still had to survive passage through the *House of Lords*.

A plan to ambush the Bill in the *House of Lords* was developed by the usual suspects. However, like with a lot of things the PubCos do themselves, it was a rather blunt and unimaginative ambush that was put in place. A Lord was selected to lead the charge, who had until only last year sat on the Board of Marstons Brewery. He was to table an amendment that to all intents and purposes would nullify the key provisions in the Bill. However, it was seen off by seasoned

and genuine supporters of the British pub industry as well as by the Government, who to their immense credit were determined to reflect the will of the elected chamber next door.

Therefore, the new *Statutory Code of Conduct* for the PubCos, will now include a Market Rent Option (MRO). This basically means that when this Bill shortly becomes law, that a PubCo tenant can elect to have a Market Rent Only (MRO) option at certain trigger points (such as a lease change etc), whereby he or she can buy their beer from whomever and wherever they choose.

And, just in case the PubCos think they can stick the rent up arbitrarily to make amends comes the sting in the tail. The Code of Conduct also allows for an independent rent review with binding arbitration. Ouch! Interesting times lie ahead on Planet PubCo.

## THANKS FOR THE HELP: IT'S BEEN A GOOD YEAR

CAMRA has campaigned for around ten years to get a fairer deal for PubCo tenants licensees, before finally seeing success just weeks before the final recess of this Parliament. And, if achieving that aim wasn't enough, along with our friends, CAMRA also managed to squeeze in the virtual closing of the long-standing planning loophole that allowed valued pubs to be demolished or converted into supermarkets without the need for planning permission. What a remarkable year it has been.

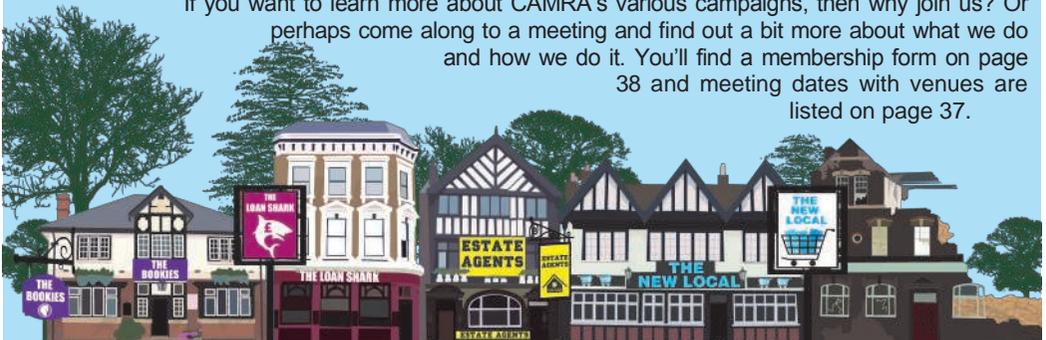
For CAMRA's 170,000 members this is two jobs well done. However, 'thanks' need go to all of you out there (not just CAMRA members, but *Hopvine* readers too) who bothered to sign the various petitions and wrote to their MPs. Without a doubt, it was this pressure that helped to achieve these remarkable results. Campaigning really can work when you try together!

However, we cannot afford to be complacent – there are still threats to our pubs out there, and in this *Hopvine* is highlighted the very real threat that has recently emerged that could see the virtual demise of Herefordshire's traditional cider and perry-makers. So, we're asking you to sign the cider petition (details on page 3). The work never stops.

If you want to learn more about CAMRA's various campaigns, then why join us? Or perhaps come along to a meeting and find out a bit more about what we do and how we do it. You'll find a membership form on page 38 and meeting dates with venues are listed on page 37.



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**



## A LITTLE SOMETHING ARRIVES IN POWYS

**Micro-pub revolution heads to the hills**

The 26th November 2014 was a red letter day for Llandrindrod Wells (and mid-Wales in general) when they finally hopped aboard the micro-pub revolution.

A much-needed injection of variety for the town's drinkers, the Arvon Ale House is to be found on the town's Temple Street close to the imposing Metropole Hotel. The diminutive ex-shop comes with a basic, modern and clean fit-out and boasts a bar with four handpumps - dispensing liquid pleasure from four typically Welsh, Borders and Midlands breweries, plus two ciders (including, sometimes, a perry). It also purveys hot and soft drinks; wine; spirits (including a wide selection of malts), but has sensibly chosen not to pander to the ersatz lager-sipping crowd. Bottled beers (for take away) are available at all times, as are simple snacks from the bar in the shape of pork pies and cheese rolls.



Herefordshire CAMRA member, Karen Powell, testing the goods on a dark winter's evening

However, beer excitement levels in the hills rose further on the 11th March this year, when brewing commenced at the Arvon, the result being a 4.5% ABV red-hued 'Irish-style' brew, which then successfully debuted across the bar. It all seems to be moving the right way for a town (and wider region) that has long had a dearth of pubs that offer a wide range of beers and ciders.

Surprisingly, the name 'Arvon' isn't Welsh, but comes from Old English and translates to: 'Friend of the People', which seems most appropriate, as with the absence of any extraneous activities such as plasma TV, gaming machines and canned music ensures good old-fashioned conversation rules. It all seems most civilised. It now remains to be seen if the Arvon can manage to emulate the feat of Herefordshire's Beer in Hand by winning the local CAMRA *Pub of the Year* award.

*Arvon Ale House, Temple Street, Llandrindrod Wells, LD1 5DF. Telephone: 07447 627267*  
 Open: Wed-Sat 5-11; Sun 12-11 including live music. Email: [arvoneales@gmail.com](mailto:arvoneales@gmail.com)

## BEER REVOLUTION IN HAY

**New beer shop opens**

Two journalists, Rob Eveleigh and Emily Januszewski, have opened a new beer shop in the quirkiest end of Hay-on-Wye in the Castle grounds. *Beer Revolution* carries an eclectic range of quality craft ales from some of the UK's most exciting new breweries, as well as some more traditional and local offerings.

*Beer Revolution, The Old Storeroom, Hay Castle, Hay-on-Wye HR3 5DG. Telephone 07870 628097*  
 Open Mon to Sat 10-5 [twitter.com/BeerRevHay](https://twitter.com/BeerRevHay) [facebook.com/beerrevolutionhay](https://facebook.com/beerrevolutionhay)



Beer on the Wye X1 Friday 10th to Sunday 12th July

<https://facebook.com/BeerOnTheWye>

<https://twitter.com/herefordcamra>



## WHAT DID *MAGNA CARTA* EVER DO FOR US?

We will hear a great deal about the Magna Carta (Great Charter) this year as 2015 is the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this important document in the history of our country. In addition to national commemorations there will be many events in Hereford as the Cathedral's Library houses the finest surviving 1217 charter which revised the 1215 document. Visit the Cathedral's website for information on the planned events.



But what did Magna Carta ever do for us ale and cider drinkers? Well, it provided

the basis of standardised weights and measures from which we can guarantee our full pint measure today. Written in Latin, Clause 35 of the Charter insists:

*'There shall be standard measures of wine, ale, and corn throughout the kingdom. There shall also be a standard width of dyed cloth, russet, and haberject, namely two ells within the selvedges. Weights are to be standardised similarly.'*

We are so used to taking our pint measure and other measures for granted that it is difficult to imagine a time when a labourer or serf found payments or quantities could be described as consisting 'of reasonable size' and would vary considerably from town to town. Unsurprisingly there were constant disputes about weights and measures.

However, Clause 35 did not define exactly what the measures should be. There were so many different units of areas, lengths, volumes and weights that it took centuries to gradually whittle them down and obtain agreement on the ones that were left. English law began to define the units and issue measurement standards, which were renewed periodically in 1496, 1588 and 1758.

Eventually in 1824 the *Weights and Measurements Act* was introduced, which unified imperial measures across the whole country.

The pint measure was introduced well before that by an Act of Parliament in 1698. Ever since, our pint and half-pint glasses have been measured and certified to assure drinkers they were not being given short measures. Until recent times this was done by adding a crown and certification number to each glass. With the advent of the EU our glasses now carry a 'CE' mark (European Conformity), but the pint measure remains the same.



As society and government became more complex the clauses in Magna Carta were gradually repealed and replaced by modern statutes. Its continuing relevance can therefore be questioned. Those readers of a certain age will remember a 1959 episode of Tony Hancock's comedy series in which he played a juryman who gave a heartfelt speech about our British freedoms, demanding "Does Magna Carta mean nothing to you? Did she die in vain?"

Whatever we think of our politicians today, Magna Carta paved the way for the first English Parliament by trying to rein in an oppressive monarch. It instigated the rights we expect to fairness and justice. It will be commemorated as the foundation of many of our freedoms, our rule of law and human rights today. We can also raise a full glass to salute the milestone it represented towards our guaranteed pint measure, so that "going for a pint" means exactly that.

Ann Pearson March 2015

## BEER ON THE WYE VOLUNTEERS' REUNION

*Annual festival 'thank you' trip strays into the darkest Forest of Dean and finds a brewery*

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January, the day of the reunion party for volunteers at *Beer on the Wye 2014*, dawned cold and bright. In excess of forty rather windswept volunteers met the coach at Hereford railway station, just before noon, for the trip south of Hereford including a short hop into Gloucestershire.



A convivial start at the Royal Arms

As we proceeded along the Ross road, at the Callow, we were treated to a view of the Black Mountains, the Skirid and the Sugar Loaf, all topped with snow and bathed in sunshine.

Our first stop was reached off the main A49 along narrow country lanes to the village of Llangrove and the **Royal Arms**. This small cosy pub is situated at the top end of the village. A chalkboard outside proclaiming "Royal Arms welcomes Herefordshire CAMRA" gave a hint of what was to come, and on entering we were greeted with the site of a table covered with appetising sandwiches. A warm and enthusiastic welcome from our hosts and a cheery open fire really set the

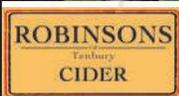
# The Stockton Cross Inn

Leominster Herefordshire HR6 0HD 01568 612509

Second annual Beer, Cider and Food Fayre  
24th, 25th, 26th July



- Beers & Ciders from all over the 3 counties
- Food tent full of local producers
- **Live music everyday including 'The Pedigrees'**
- Now in development for launch at the fayre **'Stockton Cross Selected ale'**
- Courtesy car



Open 11-11 Everyday; Locally sourced homemade food all day everyday

*Fresh Fish Fridays*

Second Friday of every month  
All sourced from Owens fish in Leominster market



Third Thursday of  
Every month  
7 choices of Pure Breed  
Hereford beef  
Sourced Locally

scene for the day ahead.

The pub consists of a large bar and a smaller games room, and the decor is a mix of white-wash and bare stone walls. The normal real ale offer is one from Wye Valley, and a guest which could come from near or far. Cider drinkers are offered a wide choice of local bottled ciders. However, with just a tiny bit of prompting from Andrew, the organiser of our day out, our hosts had laid on Wobbly Wabbitt and Wobbly Welder. By the time we departed we really felt the party had started.



Steve Williams explains the background.....and lays on a few beers

Leaving Llangrove, we again travelled along county lanes new to many on board, with glimpses of the Malvern Hills, bathed in sunshine like the Welsh Hills, but this time without the snow. We travelled onward to the outskirts of Micheldean - home of the **Bespoke Brewery**.

Situated on the former site of a large independent Victorian Brewery "Wintles", which was closed in the early 1900's, Bespoke Brewery was established in 2012. We gathered in the "The Brewery Tap" bar where a range of five of their ales were on offer, all with memorable names: Running the Gauntlet; Saved by the Bell; Over a Barrel; Money for Old Rope and Going off Half Cocked. Steve Williams, Bespoke's Head Brewer gave tours around the 10-barrel brew house, explaining their



### BESPOKE BREWERY

In 1868 one of Mitcheldean's three maltsters, Thomas Wintle diversified into brewing. This led to increased demand for malt, requiring a new malthouse to be built in 1870 adjacent to the brewery. These buildings still dominate their surroundings just off the High Street. The family business became a limited company in 1923, and grew to own 72 licensed houses in the area. With fifty employees, it was the only large-scale business in the town, but a take-over by the Cheltenham Original Brewery Company in 1930 put an end to brewing. The malting business continued on the site until the mid 1940s.

Brewing returned to the site in 2014 with Bespoke Brewery, although not in the original brewery buildings but in a former electrical store at the rear. Set up by businessman Mike Bayliss, it brews four core

ales, named after old sayings or phrases:

Running the Gauntlet 4.4% - full flavoured bitter  
 Saved By The Bell 3.8% - light hoppy bitter  
 Money For Old Rope 4.8% - rich dark stout  
 Over A Barrel Strong 5.0% - rich ale

Four more beers are produced in rotation, a number which is expected to grow to six.

The Kings Shilling Mild 4.2% - brown ale  
 Going Off Half Cocked 4.6% - golden pale ale  
 Leading Light 3.5% - light blonde ale  
 Chip Off The Old Block 3.4% - smooth mild

Label and pump clip artwork explains the origin of the sayings. Alternatively, customers are invited to generate their own personalised images a feature which explains the name of the brewery itself.



The excellent Bespoke Brewery Tap

method of brewing and the types of malts and hops used. A small shop was situated next door where many of our party purchased beer to take home.

Time was all too short and we had to depart to our next target, the **Roadmaker** at Gorsley, a few hundred yards the Herefordsire side of the boundary with Gloucestershire. The Roadmaker is owned and run by three ex-British Gurkha soldiers. The bar area has a large cylindrical

glass wood-burning stove, which on a cold January day was most welcome. The Roadmaker's spacious restaurant has seating for fifty people, where in the evenings traditional Nepalese food is served, but on Sunday lunchtime they offer an English roast. Beers sampled included Bitter and Adam Henson's Rare Breed from Butcombe Brewery

Our penultimate call was to the **Alma Inn** at Linton. Former Herefordshire *Pub of the Year* and well known to many CAMRA members, it is a very popular local and is also home to the prodigious and extremely popular *Linton Music Festival*. The main bar area has an open fire and cosy atmosphere. Beers sampled were Malvern Hills Black Pear, Ludlow Gold, Butcombe Bitter and Oakham JHB. This was a great opportunity for so many of our members to visit before licensees Graham and Linda Webb moved off to Dorset for a well-earned retirement (see page 12 for full story).



Team *Beer on the Wye* at the Roadmaker before the dinner

We travelled in darkness to our final destination the **Red Lion** at Winters Cross near Peterstow. This pub was heaving! A shooting party were already enjoying the cosy warmth of the pub ahead of us. Somehow we all managed to squeeze in, but once served with our drinks we were shown to our reserved tables for our meal. The food served was hot and delicious and the staff worked hard to ensure that we were kept on schedule, as many had trains to catch on our return to Hereford. Beers on offer included Hobsons Best and Old Prickly, Wye Valley Bitter and Butty Bach and Otter Winter Brew.

Throughout the day our coach driver Denzel coped admirably with the numerous twisting country lanes, difficult car parks and must be commended for getting us safely to our destinations and home again.

Andrew Pearson, once again, organised an magnificent outing with varied and interesting venues. He is owed a special thanks this year, as he had extra work when he found that the original venue for the meal, the Pennyfarthing at Aston Crews had closed on 10<sup>th</sup> January! Fortunately he was able to re-organise things at the Red Lion as a replacement.

## Annual Beer Festival

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July

Showcasing over 20 Real  
Ales and Ciders

Music Everyday

The Rose &  
Crown  
Tenbury Wells



01584 811336  
[www.whites.cc](http://www.whites.cc)

*Fred, Sadie & Molly welcome you*

## The Oxford Arms

*Duke Street, Kington, Herefordshire  
HR5 3DR*

*Tel: 01544 230 322*

[www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk](http://www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk)



*We offer good, wholesome food all  
cooked on the premises using local  
produce from local businesses*

*Food served*

*Mon. - Thur. 6pm -9pm only*

*Fri & Sat. - 12noon-2.30pm & 6pm-9pm*

*Sunday Lunch - 12-2.30pm Roast only*

*One course - £7.50, Two courses - £10.50*

*Three courses - £13.50*

*Sunday Evening - 6pm - 8.30pm*

*Roast & Normal Menu*

*During the summer we are open all  
day on Fri, Sat & Sun*

*We run an old traditional style pub,  
(no sky tv or juke box), and serve great  
local real ales.*

*We are family and dog-friendly and you  
will always receive a warm friendly  
welcome from us and our staff.*

# PANDY

*By our Transport Correspondent*

This walk features two long distance paths, Beacons Way and Offa's Dyke National Trail both of which are much loved by walkers in this area. The views of the Skirrid (Holy Mountain) and Sugar Loaf are captivating as you weave your way up to a ridge overlooking some of Monmouthshire's finest hill country.

The views across to the wilder world of the Black Mountains are simply wonderful. This four mile ramble follows mainly paths and runs along a quiet ridge lane. There are a few stiles, but you'll mainly encounter bridle gates. There are some moderate climbs in the early part, but it is downhill all of the way to Pandy. Allow about two hours.

There are two pubs to explore on this outing, one in Llanvihangel Crucorney and the other in Pandy, both being roadside villages which almost converge. The Skirrid Inn at Llanvihangel is said to date from the 12th century and is often cited as the oldest inn in Wales; sceptics raise your eyebrows now. We know for certain that it has existed since the 17th century because CADW (Welsh equivalent of English Heritage) says so. Whatever the case, there's fine wood panelling, old furniture and stone floors that make this old hostelry a place to stay awhile. Be warned...it can get busy and the atmosphere is somewhat lost when people crowd in. The Skirrid harbours many a tale, none more chilling than when it housed a courtroom; the gory details relate mainly to the ill fate of many a villain that stood before the judge, hanging comes to mind. Now, in these less hang happy times, people are more content to simply quaff a beer or two talking of which, Green King IPA and Reverend James were on tap when we called in. The Pandy Inn (also sometimes referred to as the Old Pandy Inn) dates from the 18th century and is a handsome red brick roadside inn, it also has a restaurant and accommodation. The Pandy retains two bars; the one to the left of the main door is a fine place to settle down for a drink after a ramble. The pub usually serves Wye Valley Bitter and Butty Bach on handpump.



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## Llanfihangel Court

This is a linear walk between the two villages although you can simply walk on the old road back to complete a circuit. The X4, direct from Hereford stops right outside the Skirrid Inn; it is about 40 minutes on the bus. With the entrance behind you go right to pass the garage/shop and turn first left opposite the church to drop down to cross the A465 with care. Go along the drive towards Llanfihangel Court, a Tudor mansion with rich interior decoration, although it is only open to the public on a limited number of days in the year. The lane climbs to the right and then left to become a track.

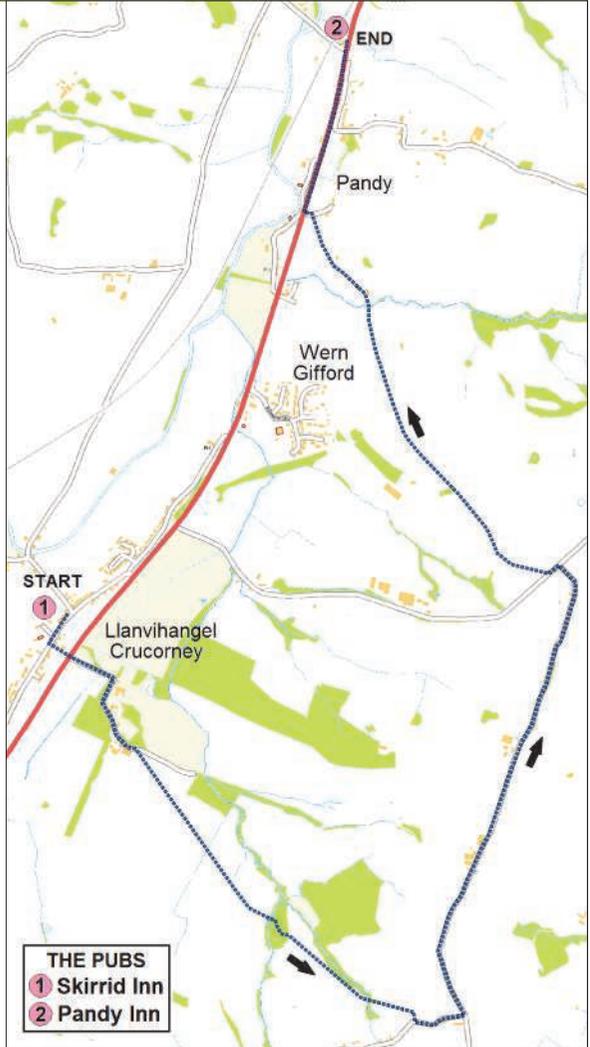
Just beyond a barn turn right through a bridle gate into a field (waymarked Beacons Way). Go ahead and then slightly left to proceed through another gate. Follow the path through two pastures keeping alongside the fence and through gates. When the fence dips sharp left head

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slightly left to a gate into a wood, over a footbridge and exiting at another gate. Now the climbing begins for sure, veering up to a bridge and gate, then upwards again to the top left corner. Cross a stile and climb once more, keeping the stream in a gully to your left until you reach a lane.

**Ridge walk**

Go left to pass a dwelling and the road rises up to a junction. Go left here and follow this quiet lane for over half a mile. There are fine views here across Monmouthshire towards the Forest of Dean. The lane eventually bends left and descends to a junction. Go left at the junction and look for a bridle gate on the right. This is the Offa's Dyke Path, waymarked with an acorn symbol, and your way is ahead, striding down the field to a double stile and bridge. In the next pasture aim very slightly right to go through another double stile and slightly left to pass through a third and onto a single bridle gate. Go through it and turn right to follow the hedge, through a gate and then slightly left down the field to the bottom corner; you can see Pandy ahead. You leave Offa's Dyke Path here as it cuts left. Cross a stile and footbridge to reach a track. Keep ahead along the track, passing a dwelling on your left; follow the track until it reaches a lane. Turn left to the main road and go right to walk along the verge for a short distance before crossing, with care, the road to join a path by the bus stop for Hereford and the Pandy Inn beyond. Time for a well deserved beer.



**Factfile**

Explorer map: (0L13) Brecon Beacons National Park

Travel to Llanvihangel Crucorney (Bus X4 Cardiff via Abergavenny)

There are buses from Hereford Country Bus Station (Maylords and Broad Street) on Mondays to Saturdays at 0830,1030,1230.

Return Buses from Pandy to Hereford (Bus X4)

Buses leave Pandy inn (opposite Park Hotel) on Mondays to Saturdays at 1346, 1531,and 1616

Traveline: 'Phone 0871 200 22 33 for up to the minute bus times, or go to [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info).

**The Pubs**

The Skirrid Inn is open lunchtimes 1130 onwards (and from 5.30pm) all day Saturdays and Sunday afternoons only. Closed Monday lunchtimes

The Pandy Inn, Pandy is open lunchtimes Tuesday-Thursdays until 3pm and from 6 in the evening. Closed Monday lunchtimes; open all day Friday-Sunday.

Check [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) for details.

## TOP OF THE PILE: CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR

### **Award goes to Gloucestershire village pub**

After hundreds of visits, months of deliberation and several elimination rounds, the best pub in Britain has been announced - and it's not a fancy gastro-pub in London. The winner of CAMRA's 2015 Pub of The Year is the Salutation Inn, a small locals' pub in the village of Ham, close to the Severn Estuary.



What is more surprising is that licensee, Peter Tiley, had never even pulled a pint when he decided to switch careers and take over the running of the pub with his wife, Claire, two years ago.

The former business analyst quit his job in London to follow his love of beer. Within a year the pub had won its local CAMRA branch competition, before taking the regional title on the way to beating 50,000 other pubs to take the UK's top honour.

Known locally as the Sally, the Salutation is a genuine rural free-house and because the freehold is owned by the Berkeley Castle estate completely free of tie. Beers on offer come mainly from local brewers – including Tiley's - brewed on the premises following the installation of a microbrewery at the end of February.

The pub dates back to the mid-19th century and Mr Tiley has been discovering an interesting history as it used to be the venue for post-mortem examinations and even inquests. The Sally has two cosy bars, a log fire and skittle alley, being described in CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide 2015* as a "rural gem in the Severn Valley, within walking distance of the Jenner Museum, Berkeley Castle and Deer Park. The enthusiastic landlord keeps an inspired selection of ales and eight real ciders and perries."

CAMRA director Abigail Newton said: "What Peter and Claire have done in the short time they have been running the pub is nothing short of staggering and goes to show that passion, enthusiasm, and a real love of beer are hugely important when running a pub.

Pubs are judged on atmosphere, level of service, value for money and community focus, with extra weighting for the quality of their real ale, cider and perry.

### The Three Other Finalists

The Freshfield, Formby, Merseyside

The Harewood Arms, Broadbottom, Greater Manchester

The Windmill, Sevenoaks Weald, Kent

### Herefordshire Evening Buses

Herefordshire Council has recently allocated an additional small sum of money to re-introduce buses cut last year. You could be forgiven for thinking an election was looming. There was a major outcry by the general public last year including several CAMRA members who have lobbied hard since to get buses back on the road in the evenings. Comments Les Lumsdon, our transport correspondent:

"We'd like to see buses return to Hereford city routes, but we've been particularly pushing for evening buses on the Madley, Kington, Ross routes as we know pubs have lost out as a result of the cuts."

The Council's cabinet are about to finalise the bus support package as Hopvine went to press; we are hoping that evening buses will be back on the road before summer.

# Herefordshire CAMRA

## What's on

### Branch Meetings.

Wednesday 29th April: 8.00pm at the New Inn, Staunton-on-Wye.

Wednesday 27th May: 8.00pm at the Imperial, Widemarsh St., Hereford.

### Beer Festival Meeting

Tuesday 14th April: 8.00pm at the Barrels, St Owen Street, Hereford. All members are welcome to come and join the team planning Beer on the Wye XI, whatever skills you have to offer.

### Social Events

Saturday 16th May: By train to Worcester to visit various pubs offering *Mild in May*. Leave Hereford 10.40am, Ledbury 10.57am. Contact social secretary to arrange discounted group rail tickets.

If you know of any event that might be of interest please contact the editorial team (details on page 39). Deadline for next issue May 15th 2015

## CAMRA BEER FESTIVALS

**Friday 24th and Saturday 25th April.** 3rd CAMRA Gloucester Beer and Cider Festival. Blackfriars Priory, Ladybellegate Street, Gloucester. Over 100 beers plus ciders and perries. Foreign beers available. Gloucestershire cheese stall. Food and entertainment. Admission including commemorative glass and programme - £6. Free pint for card-carrying CAMRA members. Open 11.30am to 11pm both days. Wheelchair access.

**Saturday 2nd May,** CAMRA Montgomeryshire Beer & Cider Festival 12 noon to 12 midnight, on the lane behind the Sportsman, and in the pub itself Parkers Lane, Newtown, Powys, SY16 2AQ. 5 mins walk to railway/bus stations. 25+ ales and 25+ ciders, food stalls, music, entertainment, an ale trail of the best ale houses in the town. [facebook.com/camramontgomeryshire](http://facebook.com/camramontgomeryshire).

**Friday 10th to Sunday 12th July.** Herefordshire's own festival - Beer on the Wye. See page 19.

**Great Welsh Beer Festival.** Note that due to the non-availability of the desired dates at the Millenium Stadium, this event will not take place in 2015.

## LOCAL BEER FESTIVALS

Thursday 2nd to Tuesday 7th April. Oxford Arms, Kington: A dozen locally produced real ales with some ciders and perries.

Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd May Rossbeerfest Ross Rowing Club <http://www.rossbeerfest.org/location.html> over 30 beers and ciders live music

Friday (eve) 8th to Sunday 10th May. Ludlow Castle. SIBA Beer Competition/Ludlow Spring Festival: 180 ales from Wales & West region. Meet the Brewer Fri eve.

Wednesday 17th to Tuesday 23th June. Oxford Arms, Kington: A dozen locally produced real ales with some ciders and perries.

Friday (eve) 10th to Sunday 12th July. Rose & Crown Burford: 4th annual beer festival; over twenty local ales and ciders; food; live entertainment.

Friday (eve) 19th to Sunday 21st June. Royal George, Lingen: Beer Festival

Saturday 4th July Bartestree Cider and Beer Festival at Bartestree Village Hall. Beers and ciders to be enjoyed while watching a cricket match.

Friday 24th to Sunday 26th July. Stockton Cross Inn, Kimbolton. Second annual Beer, Cider and Food Fayre

# A Campaign of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer tax

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## Join CAMRA Today

**Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.**

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit [www.camra.org.uk/joinus](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus) or call **01727 867201**. All forms should be addressed to the: Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

### Your Details

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
 Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
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Direct Debit Non DD

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 (UK & EU)  
 Joint Membership £29.50  £31.50   
 (Partner at the same address)

For Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call **01727 867201**.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applications will be processed within 21 days

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
 Forename(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email address (if different from main member) \_\_\_\_\_

01/15

**Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers**

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**Join CAMRA today – [www.camra.org.uk/joinus](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus)**



### Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
**Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW**

**Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number**

To the Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Bank or Building Society: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
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This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
  - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
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Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

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March 2015

Landlords! Talk directly to your target market. Herefordshire pub-goers and real ale drinkers.  
**Advertise in the *Hopvine***

The *Hopvine* is produced four times per year and, of the 4,000 copies of each issue, most are distributed to around 160 pubs in the county, where they may be read many times over by different customers. Others go to real ale pubs further afield, plus beer festivals etc.

**Attractive discounts** are available for entries in consecutive issues, and even bigger discounts for four issues paid in advance.

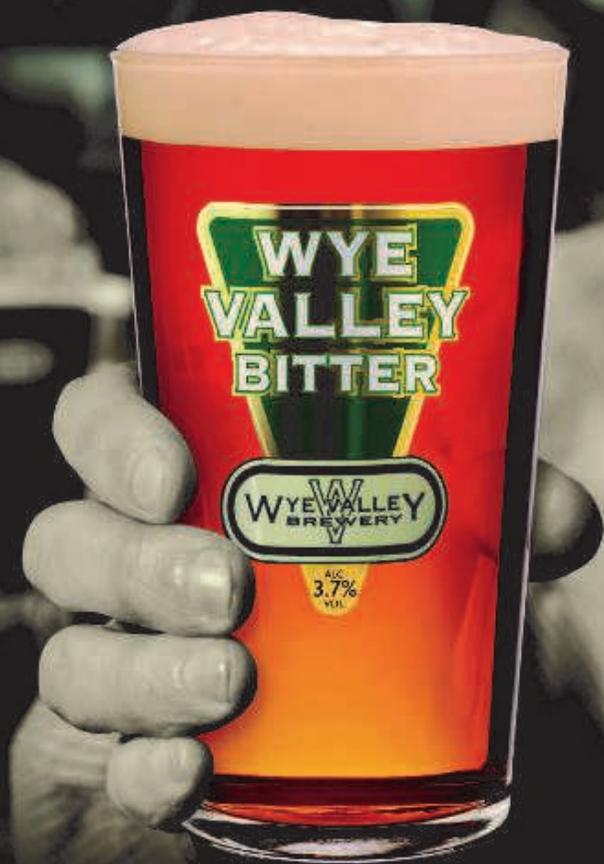
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WYE'S WORDS No. 54



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