

leicestershire drinker

magazine of the leicestershire branches of the campaign for real ale

Issue 4 - Spring 2023

Local Pub and Brewery News - Mild in May
Peterborough Crawl - Rail Ale



FREE

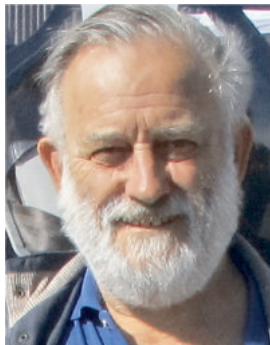
leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Editor's Welcome

Christmas has come and gone and we look forward to spring and eventually summer, I hope you enjoyed the festivities which are probably now long forgotten. As clocks spring forwards, days get longer and it gets a bit warmer, we can perhaps start using the beer gardens and assuaging our consciences by walking to and from the pub. I trust that your New Year's resolution was to try and support the hospitality sector.



Hopefully, as well, the festive period gave landlords' coffers a bit of a boost in these difficult times. As purse strings get tighter it is tempting to buy cheaper drinks at a supermarket and drink at home but remember that supermarkets have deeper pockets than most publicans and if we don't support pubs now, they might not be there when you think you can afford to drink there.

Can I appeal to all members to provide updates of details of pubs on WhatPub. Many pubs across the country had different opening times, beer ranges or facilities compared to how they traded before the pandemic and financial crisis, and there are likely to be changes in some pubs that CAMRA WhatPub coordinators are not yet aware of.

So, if you are drinking in your local or another pub somewhere in the branch area – or indeed anywhere in the country, for that matter – take a look at the pub's entry on WhatPub and if you notice that the details shown are incorrect, please submit an update to get the entry amended – just click on 'Submit Updates' and tell us what's changed. Non CAMRA members can do this too.

Festivals are now well and truly back on the agenda and the first local one to come up is Loughborough, which, after many years at the Polish Club, is this year returning to the Town Hall. Leicester hoped to stage a spectacular festival during the summer but many details remain to be ironed out, and Hinckley a little later in the year hope to stage another Rail Ale Festival. Melton Mowbray Beer & Cider Festival is taking place on September 15th/16th.

Loughborough Beer Festival will have a choice of over 100 real ales, ciders and craft beers from breweries across the UK, and there will be live music on Saturday afternoon from the Wandering Mowselberries and Saturday night from Wellard Willy playing pop and rock covers with their unique twist.

As with many festivals now, contactless card payment is preferred and cash will only be accepted at the front desk. £5 prepaid beer tokens can also be used for food purchases. There should be significantly more seating than the previous festival, which we are sure will be welcomed.

Roy Denney

Thank you!

The magazine you are reading is free. This is because of the pubs, breweries and other businesses that have sponsored an advert in this publication.

We salute our advertisers and you can do the same by visiting them. Why not say you found them in *Leicestershire Drinker* at the same time?

NEW
VENUE!



Campaign
for
Real Ale

LOUGHBOROUGH & NORTH
LEICESTERSHIRE CAMRA

46TH BEER FESTIVAL

2ND TO 4TH MARCH 2023

THURSDAY TO SATURDAY NOON TO 11PM

HOT
FOOD

GIN
BAR



CAMRA
MEMBERS
£2

100

NON
MEMBERS
£4

REAL ALES
CRAFT BEERS
REAL CIDERS

Saturday Night - Live Music From Wellard Willy

LOUGHBOROUGH **TOWN HALL**
Market Place Loughborough LE11 3EB

   LOUGHCAMRA
WWW.LOUGHBOROUGHCAMRA.CO.UK

Leicestershire CAMRA Branches

Hinckley and Bosworth (HB) hinckleyandbosworth.camra.org.uk
Email chairman@hinckleyandbosworth.camra.org.uk
Facebook [facebook.com/HinckleyCamra](https://www.facebook.com/HinckleyCamra) Twitter [@HinckleyCamra](https://twitter.com/HinckleyCamra)

Leicester (LEI) leicester.camra.org.uk
Email secretary@leicester.camra.org.uk
Facebook and Twitter [@LeicesterCAMRA](https://www.facebook.com/LeicesterCAMRA)

Loughborough & North Leics (LOU) loughboroughcamra.co.uk
Email loughborocamra@gmail.com
Facebook [facebook.com/loughcamra](https://www.facebook.com/loughcamra) Twitter [@LoughCAMRA](https://twitter.com/LoughCAMRA) Insta [instagram.com/loughcamra](https://www.instagram.com/loughcamra)

Melton Mowbray & District (MM) meltonmowbray.camra.org.uk
Email chair@meltonmowbray.camra.org.uk

Vale of Belvoir (VB) valeofbelvoir.camra.org.uk



HELP WANTED

The local branches are run entirely by voluntary teams and more help is always welcome. Staffing festivals is a great opportunity to get involved but another is dropping off copies of this publication at pubs you would probably enjoy visiting anyway. Each branch receives an allocation to distribute so if you think you can help please contact your local branch.

Open Meetings and Events Diary

Pub 'festivals' are organised and publicised at fairly short notice so keep an eye on the branches' websites.

February

23rd Leicester branch social/pub quiz, Wygston's House 7.30pm (LEI)

March

Train/bus trip to Walsall (see website for date tbd) (HB)

1st Melton branch meeting, Charlie's Bar (MM)

2nd - 4th Loughborough Beer Festival (LOU)

16th - 19th Burton Ale Trail

18th Coach trip, Doncaster and Retford (LEI)

30th Leicester branch meeting, and social 7.30pm venue tbc (LEI)

April

Coach trip to Black Country (date tbd) (HB)

8th The other Leicester - different pubs to normal. Meet Globe 12.30pm (LEI)

21st - 23rd National Members' Weekend / CAMRA AGM, Octagon Sheffield

27th Leicester branch social 8pm (venue tbc) (LEI)

May

6th Coronation celebrations - tbc

20th Vintage bus tour (route tbc) (LEI)

25th Leicester branch social 8pm (venue tbc) (LEI)

June

11th Public bus day out, Blaby (St Margaret's Bus Station, 12pm) (LEI)

29th Leicester branch meeting and social 7.30pm (venue tbc) (LEI)

Leicestershire Drinker

© Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

Published by the Leicestershire branches of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Thousands of copies of the *Leicestershire Drinker* are distributed across Leicestershire, parts of neighbouring counties and at festivals etc. Read new and old copies at leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk

If you wish to comment on any article or wish to contribute something for consideration, please use the website or send them to the editor Roy Denney editor@leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk
We are happy to tidy up raw material but will not publish anything received which is offensive or contrary to the legal framework within which we live. We reserve the right to edit, hold over, or discard material.

The views expressed in *Leicestershire Drinker* are not necessarily those of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd nor its local officers. Material is received from numerous sources and we are not able to check it, so readers should make their own enquiries. As we go to press the information provided is to the best of our knowledge correct.

We are a not-for-profit organisation and rely on advertising to cover the costs of this publication. We do not though, endorse any products or services contained or promoted within those advertisements and readers must use their own judgement.

Publication Dates

Sep 15th, Dec 15th, Mar 15th, Jun 15th.

Next deadline for advertising or other content is April 15th covering the period Jun 15th to Sep 15th.

Advertising rates

Full page £310, Half page £165, Quarter page £90. Rates for back page and centre page spread available on request. Small-ads offer - pay for a quarter page 3 consecutive editions have 4th free.

Full details at leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk or from advert@leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk

Leicestershire Drinker is designed and printed by Catshill Design design.catshill.com
Deposited with the British Library.

HELPLINES

Hygiene / Food Standards - food.gov.uk

Trading Standards - For problems such as consistent short measures, no price lists, pass it to Leicestershire trading standards if considered appropriate - 0116 232 3232 or 0800 223 1133

Citizen's Advice - 0800 144 8848 citizensadvice.org.uk

PLAN YOUR JOURNEY

Stagecoach stagecoachbus.com/about/midlands Centrebus centrebust.info

Arriva arrivabus.co.uk/midlands

Kinchbus/Skylink kinchbus.co.uk

Firstbus firstbus.co.uk/leicester

Traveline - traveline.info

Pub Discoveries / Gossip / Comings and Goings

During 2021 just under 800 pubs in Britain ceased trading either permanently or on a long-term basis and when stats are available, it is expected that last year would have been at least as bad. In addition, over the last couple of years, it is thought not far short of 100 small breweries have given up. One of our local brewers has told us that there were far too many anyway for them all to survive.

Broken down, these figures tell an interesting if disappointing story. In reality, we only lost one pub a week net, as optimists are still converting buildings into pubs or bars of one sort or another. In as far as we can tell, the greatest area of loss is the back street boozier in what were industrial heartlands. Many traditional clubs are going under but in Stoke Golding, always worth a visit with its existing pub offerings, the Stoke Golding Club is trying to encourage CAMRA members and extending its range of real ales.

The North West is the hardest hit region with the North East and West Midlands faring badly as well. It would be fascinating if we could break these figures down further. Greater London and the South East saw a lot of new pubs opening but were they in the suburbs now so many people 'work' at home? How did the central London pubs fare? Now that people only go into London to work on the odd day from time to time, people are moving out of high-cost London and living along the routes of train services to London and that includes the rural villages of the East Midlands. Is that why as a region we saw an overall increase in the number of pubs? Less office more leisure? It remains to be seen how many regret that decision given what is happening to our rail services.

A similar story can be seen further north. Local comments suggest industrial towns and cities of South and West Yorkshire are seeing many closures but overall, the numbers for Yorkshire and Humberside as a whole are net positive.



The Blue Boar insignia

Unfortunately, many pubs are saving on costs by varying their hours making it difficult to know when you can actually visit them. Supporting your local over the difficult period we find ourselves in, is more important than ever, but not knowing they will be open can put people off, which makes it even worse.

Some good news for pubs though. The new draught duty rate for beer and cider has been expanded to include containers of 20L and

over, to make sure small brewers and pubs can benefit. The removal of a cliff edge in tax support for small cider makers is also welcome with a new progressive duty system confirmed for this year.

Leicester has always been an important city. Being on what might be described as the border of northern England and the south and very near the middle of England. It has always been seen as an important place to have on your side.

Turn a sod anywhere within miles and you will turn up some historic artefact or indeed a lost king. Strangely though, as conquerors always sacked enemy strongholds, not a lot of our distant history is evident in the city.

Look a bit outside though and there are castles, abbeys, monasteries and further back, Bronze Age and even earlier settlements.

Public houses however do reflect historical backgrounds. The **Blue Boar** was the heraldic identity of King Richard III and we do of course also have the **King Richard III** pub itself. These are named to reflect our history but we do have some truly historic pubs. Not everybody seems to appreciate our history though; Young's in their wisdom have decided to change all their pub signs to the first letter of the significant word, for example, the Lamb becomes L. They've deleted history by removing the pub signs and anonymising the pubs.

In Leicester, the **Wygston's House** is medieval but has not been a public house very long, but the

Saracen's Head as was, now the **Knight & Garter** has been a pub since the 1300s. The **Windmill** in Loughborough goes back ages as do numerous others but the **Anne of Cleves** in Melton is a whole history book all by itself.

Dating back to 1384 originally as the Manor of Lewes, it was linked to the church until Henry VIII ordered the dissolution of the monasteries, overseen by Thomas Cromwell. Having confiscated it, Henry gave it to Cromwell who lived in it for a few years. Thomas had arranged the marriage of Henry to Anne of Cleves but was not forgiven for that and was beheaded on Tower Hill.

Anne got the house as part of her divorce settlement, but it returned to the crown when she died in 1557. Since then, it went from being a parsonage to a cock fighting venue and then to being the family home of a local farmer and Justice of the Peace. After that family passed on in the early 20th century the house becomes a tearoom and a bread and cake shop. It has also been a guesthouse at some point but by 1996 it was almost derelict and Everards restored the building as a public house. This is a pub in a historic building but has not been a pub for very long.

In the early days, the first sources of beer were the religious orders, monasteries etc or even many churches. As this developed the place where it was provided became a separate building beside the church which is why so many early pubs were by churches and had names of a religious nature.

The pub thought to be the first in Leicester was the **Cross Keys** which used to be down High Cross Street beside the church and is thought to have been opened about the same time as the Saracen's Head. The Cross Keys is the name of the newsletter of St Peters church in Glenfield and it is not a coincidence as the crossed keys relates to St Peter. The Angel also ancient and now lost, obviously had that religious association but the same can be said of the Saracens Head as that relates to the crusades. The **Salmon** in Leicester has a bricked-up passageway leading

from the cellar out under the road in the direction of a religious building.

The **Belper Arms**, Newton Burgoland, after a chequered few years, has survived relatively unscathed and now has a new landlord and some excellent beers. Reputably the oldest pub in Leicestershire (circa 1290), and rumoured to be haunted.

If readers know of any pubs with curious histories, ghosts or scandals we will be glad to spread the knowledge further.

I have had some feedback from a snippet in our last magazine. I mentioned a pub sign, found hanging on a wall in a pub of a different name in Cornwall and wondered whether it ever hung outside a pub. It appears it did.

Peter Harris of Southwell Focus knows of the **Elephant's Nest**. He can confirm that the pub is in Devon at Mary Tavy, north of Tavistock on the western edge of Dartmoor and the sign was used in the 1980's. He thinks that the pub was named after a rather large landlord in the 1960's-70's but who had left when Peter used to know the pub in the mid 70's. Peter has left Devon and goes back infrequently but thinks that the pub is still going, with an active social life named after the pub.

Fortunately, this month we have seen far fewer licensee comings and goings so let's hope they were not just hanging on for the festivities. Some have already called it a day including, unfortunately, the **Coach & Horses**, Kibworth Harcourt. There were a few reopenings / rebrandings etc. and one particularly good bit of news as far as your editor is concerned is in regard to the much-lamented **Black Horse** at Grimston. He has friends in Lincolnshire and this pub was a good halfway point for them to meet up for a meal.



The Black Horse, Grimston

This 17th-century pub has been closed for some time but the site has seen two planning applications rejected and now it has been given a lifeline as locals have raised nearly a quarter of a million pounds; applied to the Government for

Pub and Brewery News

matched funding and received £245,000 in December.

It had been listed as a local community asset by Melton Borough Council and confirmed at a tribunal in 2021. It is a step nearer to serving its first pint since January 2020 and an offer to buy the property has been put to the present owners and hopefully, if it is accepted, tenants can be found to run it and turn it into the thriving local it once was. The **Nags Head**, Stapleton has also recently re-opened.

On the other side of the equation, the Dog and Gun in Hinckley will not be reopening as a pub. Having been closed for several years, planning permission was granted to convert it in to flats, and work appears have started. The **Red Lion** in Barlestone has reopened under new management. and the **Black Horse**, Hinckley has changed hands after the present licensees left due to illness. The landlords of the **Elephant and Castle** in Thurlaston have left having run it for six years. The pub remains open but there will be no food served until the new landlords arrive. The

Crafty Baron in Hinckley is no longer serving food.

Looking at the situation and the threats to our pub culture there are two other worrying trends. The first is perhaps inevitable but increasing numbers of pubs will not take cash. This is very understandable but many older people still do not have plastic. The other trend is of concern. I understand an increasing number of pubs don't want people standing at the bar and some even insist on table service. They liked this during Covid and want to continue it but it is a complete anathema to the traditions of the English pub the envy of many other countries.

Standing leads to mingling and socialising and allows people to drift in without planning or prior arrangements. If you are seated you really have to be with company and you will tend to stay fixed with that company. That is not what a pub is about and there is a middle ground. I knew a pub in Yorkshire which had no seats round the walls and had shelves for your beer. People leaned against the wall and chatted and mingled. They did have some tables in the middle of the rooms or along one side but the standing culture was so popular that tables were removed to create slim metal columns with a wide circular ledge at leaning level with a smaller one lower down for pots. The design was evolving and eventually, that brewery had three pubs redesigned in this fashion and they added the twist of having a few bar stools so people like me who now find standing difficult, could sit by the columns at the same height as standing customers.

I have no idea whether those pubs are still like that but it worked well and could allow for non-standing bar serving areas.

Despite all the threats to traditional pubs, the micropub concept keeps expanding. Locally, Charnwood Brewery wants to move into a former hairdressing salon in Barrow upon Soar. They already own the **Sorrel Fox** in Mountsorrel and the **Hall Croft Tap** in Shepshed. **Tin Hat**, Hinckley is offering pints of cask ale greatly reduced on Mondays and the **Red Lion** in Barwell has a new tenant (Jamie) and was reported to be serving Bass and Pedigree. The **Ashby Tavern**, Hinckley has now reopened. The **Clarence Cafe Bar** also in Hinckley, officially opened before Christmas, with three real ales and offering a CAMRA discount.

On the brewery front, a number of breweries are producing more short runs, lesser batches and



Open at 4pm
Monday to
Thursday and
12pm Friday to
Sunday.
alestonepubco
@outlook.com

THE ALE STONE

Cornish Beer Festival
Friday 30th June to 9th July

20 of the best casks from Cornwall alongside handmade Cornish pasties will be served over July fortnight.

For some holiday reading this year, pick up Diary of a Publican by Kieran Lyons. On sale over the bar or from Amazon.

660 Aylestone Road, LE2 6DH

using smaller containers. Everards have a micro brewing unit within their new brewery which allows for the production of seasonal special and experimental brews in quantities which should cut down wastage. Greene King has made a similar plant investment and is rolling out cask pins (a four-and-a-half-gallon cask ale container). Buswell's brewery over Christmas, served an exceptional Chocolate & Mandarin Porter 5.2% and the renowned Tiswallis 5.2% bitter and is brewing Molifier a 4.0% mild, a best bitter at 4.5% and a stronger ale, Landrover at 5.7%. The brewer Gary and his wife, Jill, also licensees, will be retiring from the **Lime Kilns**, Burbage shortly after twenty-plus years.

Parish brewery has recently added a new beer to its core range, Proper Charlie (ABV 3.9%), a crisp clean light amber session bitter using four hops, Jester, Bullion, Cascade and Brewers Gold. The beer is proving very popular and can be found in a number of pubs across Leicestershire and Derbyshire as well as being permanently available at the **Melton & District Indoor Bowls Club**. A new batch of 500ml bottles of Baz's Bonce Blower is also now available.

July 2023 will mark 40 years of the Parish Brewery and when this magnificent milestone is reached, Baz Parish the founder of the brewery is looking to retire. Two 'local' buyers have shown an interest and are committed to taking over the

Parish brand, brewery kit and recipes. Baz will continue to work with them on a consultancy basis after the transfer has gone through. In the short term, the brewery will stay at Burrough on the Hill whilst a new site is being searched for somewhere else within Leicestershire.



Round Corner Brewing in Melton Mowbray has been keg only for a while. However, before Christmas, they brewed a real ale again, Wranglers XPA, a 4.2% pale ale. The taproom had one pin only and that sold out early in the evening on the day it was released. Their current plan is to brew a real ale once a month. These may be hard to find locally and Wranglers has been seen on sale in Harrogate. The release of future real ales will be announced on the brewery's Facebook page.

Looking further into the future a long way down the line, Manchester and East Midlands Rail Action Partnership (MEMRAP) is campaigning to reopen the railway from Matlock to Buxton and Manchester which can link into the network and enable us in Leicester, to use it to reach parts of the Peak District currently only accessible by car. As there are dozens of really good pubs in that area and at present, you need a bus to Derby, another to Ashbourne and a third, a village hopper to get to these this would be a great prospect. See memrap.org

If you know the history of pubs closed in your area and can help compile a register of them please contact the editor either with what you know or your contact details if you are happy to try and assist Charlie Corcoran in putting together this list.

editor@leicsdrinker.camra.co.uk
0116 233 8604

Mercaptopropionate - Not to Your Taste?

The joy of real ale is the choice it offers. The downside is you may get a perfectly good beer just not to your taste. Do you send it back; a difficult one? Real ale experts can say what is wrong with it but most of us would be saying we don't like it.

Ethyl 3-mercaptopropionate has a skunk-like bad odour which a beer can hint of, caused by the beer being exposed to light as in a display cabinet.

There is a whole list of problems beer can face and which are the cause of the unpleasantness. First of all, though what is taste? Taste comes from a series of sensory receptors not all in the mouth. Your nose plays a part in what we call taste and you have taste buds all over your mouth with different ones picking up different flavours. For example, if we eat an Indian

meal, we might experience curry flavours at the front of the mouth and think "that's not too hot" only to get a hotter aftertaste at the back of the mouth if it picks up any chilli content. You do get some aftertastes in some beers depending on their make-up.



There are up to 5000 taste buds located on the tongue. Others are located on the roof, sides and back of the mouth, and in the throat. Each taste bud contains 50 to 100 taste

receptor cells. These can differ from person to person so I cannot be sure I am tasting exactly what you are tasting. Difficult, isn't it?

What tastes are there? More than you would think and most of us probably cannot distinguish between some of them. There is sweetness, sourness, tartness, saltiness, sulphurousness, bitterness, astringency, umami, pungency, spiciness, hotness, coolness, temperature, numbness, metallicness, heartiness, a fat/greasy taste, grassiness and calcium/chalkiness.

When talking of beer though we can narrow this down. We tend to talk about beers being grassy, sulphurous, hoppy, floral, fruity, cheesy, bitter, medicinal, sickly, rancid, skunky, toffee like, vinegary, diacetylic and an overpowering hint of cloves.

You will notice the names are mostly different. That is because we call things as we perceive them i.e. what it is like.

If beer is grassy, it is down to poor processing of malt or hops; if vinegary or astringent it could be a number of things but probably bacteria is present and if it tastes of sweetcorn or butterscotch, it is often insufficient boiling leading to wort bacterial presence. All sorts of unwanted flavours caused by different chemicals are caused by contamination and bacterial action.

Then there are flavours which are intended and that is just as wide a field without even touching on hops. Different hops produce different out-products. myrcene, geraniol etc give a fruity

An advertisement for 'THE WHEELTAPPER' featuring a night-time photo of the pub's exterior with a sign that reads 'THE WHEELTAPPER'. Below the photo, text reads 'CASK & TAP HOUSE LOUGHBOROUGH REAL ALE • CRAFT BEER • CIDER'. At the bottom, it says 'VISIT WHEELTAPPER.CO.UK FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT OUR BEERS AND EVENTS' and includes social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, along with a QR code and the website 'wheeltapperbar'.

touch; linalool, elements of spiciness and if the hops are ageing not so welcome, a cheesiness.

So, brewers pick their ingredients to produce flavour which will differ but there are many other flavours to cloud the issue and possibly the beer.

How do they get variety? There are really and traditionally only three basic ingredients in ale; malt, water and yeast. Ale became a beer with the addition of hops although the two words are now synonymous.

Yeast can produce alcohol from any organic material but barley is one of the best bases and malt is barley that has been germinated and roasted and is used in both beers and whisky. There are many similarities in the production of beers and whisky early in the processes and surplus yeast from making Everard's beers ends up in Suntory Whisky.

Malt gives toffee, caramel, biscuit, chocolate and coffee flavours; a hint of toast occasionally and colours reflecting how much heat it was exposed to.

If the brewers want stronger beer, they add more malt as that produces the sugars the yeasts feed on to make the alcohol and along the way, increasing sweetness substance and colour.

For bitterness, hops are used but there is a very wide choice of hops all different and from all over the world. Hops also cause hints of flowers and of exotic fruits both citrus and tropical, like peaches etc. The stronger beer gets, quite obviously, you start to get a burn of alcohol but other flavours get mingled and more complicated.

Even the water and yeast affect flavour. Some beers like soft water, some hard; American yeasts do not affect the flavour much compared to British yeast used in a traditional bitter, where the yeast also gives fruity edges.

If you want to join a tasting panel you need to know all this, but CAMRA does run training courses.

All very interesting, but the main thing is do you think it tastes nice?

Roy Denney



BLACK HORSE LAYLESTONE

*March Down To Ours & Be No April Fool As You May
Be Over The June To Be Rewarded For Your Loyalty*

1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12

TO BE FILLED OUT BY BLACK HORSE TEAM

NAME:
EMAIL:
FAVOURITE PINT:

COLLECT A STAMP WHEN YOU PURCHASE A PINT OF REAL CASK ALE. MAXIMUM OF 3 STAMPS A DAY. COLLECT 12 BETWEEN MARCH 1ST & JUNE 30TH TO RECEIVE A £10 BLACK HORSE GIFT VOUCHER
@BLACKHORSELE2 01162837225 LE2 8NA WWW.BLACKHORSELAYLESTONE.CO.UK

Peterborough Perambulations

It only takes an hour to get to Peterborough by train. You can often get an advanced return for £18. WhatPub suggested there were plenty of pubs selling real ale, so Chris Greenwood went one Saturday and describes the tastes he explored.

“A short walk from the station brings you to the **Drapers Arms** on Cowgate. It's a Wetherspoon's pub, with an attractive facade and lots of dark wood. It was very busy, with lots of people eating. I chose a Titanic Plum Porter from the eight ales on offer. It had a sweet plummy start with a bitter stone fruit finish, quite refreshing.



Oakham Brewery Tap

My next port of call was the **Oakham Brewery Tap** on Westgate. The entrance is made partly from a brewing copper, and has an airy, industrial feel, with varied seating areas inside. There were four Oakham beers and one guest. Oakham Citra is one of my favourite beers, so I had a pint. The staff were helpful and there was a generous 20p discount for CAMRA members. The beer had plenty of citra in the mouth and a long hoppy, bitter finish.

Also on Westgate is the **Bumble Inn**, a small, basic micropub, with plenty of customers and five beers on tap. I had the Moberley Elysium, which had a sweet start, with pineapple notes and a fruity finish, with a little balancing bitterness. I also tried the Osset Citra. This had a decent mix of malt and hops, with the citra hops coming through at the end.



Drapers Arms

Just around the corner, on North Street, is the **Ostrich**. It's a rambling place, with separate seating areas and a pool table. There was lots of banter between the owner and the regulars. There

was a good choice of beers here. Both beers I drank were unfiltered, hazy pales. The Three Blind Mice Juice Rocket is a classic of its style, a hoppy mouth feel leads to an enjoyable citrus fruit finish.

The Twisted Wheel Stax had pineapple and pear notes and a very fruity finish.

It's quite a long walk, mainly up Lincoln Road, then onto Highbury Street, to the **Hand and Heart**. This is a classic backstreet boozer, with a good choice of beers. I drank the Magic Potion by Bakers Dozen. It was a hazy beer, with a good mix of citra and sabro and a fruity, dry ending. The Brewster's Cryo Sister was an easy

drinking pale, with an initial sweetness, with citra coming through and a very dry finish, with a little bitter tingle on the tongue. I had an enjoyable chat with Bram and the friendly regulars.

If you walk back down Lincoln Road, you soon get to Burghley Road, where you will find the

Burghley Club. The historic facade is nice, the pub is long and modern with pool, darts, sport on TV and three beers, including two by Tyd Steam. The lady behind the bar gave me generous tasters. I chose the Tyd Steam Snake Eyes, which was a tasty bitter beer, with a long bitter, hoppy finish.

It's a long walk to my next destination and on my way, I came across the **College Arms**. I noticed they had

Kirkstall Dissolution IPA. I got the sparkler taken off, and, it was one of the beers of the day, it was really hoppy, with grapefruit notes and a citrusy finish. It's a Wetherspoon's pub, with a very long bar and an attractive upstairs area.

Another long walk past the magnificent cathedral, brings you to the river and **Charters Bar**. It's a

simple bar and restaurant on an old barge. There were seven beers, mostly Oakham. I had the Oakham Relativity, which was £3 a pint. It was a very drinkable pale ale, with plenty of hop content and a long bitter finish.

The establishment I visited next is on Oundle Road, the **Yard of Ale**. It's a comfy, locals' pub, with a lot of sport on TV. There were five ales on offer. I tried the Castle Rock Superstition. It had a decent mix of Simcoe and Amarillo, a fruity start, citrus flavours and a dry, astringent ending.

Also, on Oundle Road is the historic **Palmerston Arms**. It's been messed about with a bit, but still has some old features. There were plenty of barrels visible in the cellar behind the bar, but not many on! I drank the Oakham Inferno, which was quite hoppy, with a bitter astringent finish.

Quite near the football ground, on Park Street, is the **Coalheavers Arms**. There were a few locals, a friendly landlady and more women than men in this comfy pub. The beer choice was very conservative, but there was a Lacon's beer on called Norfolk Gem. The beer had a balance of malt and hops, a sweetish start, with some bitterness in the finish.

It's a long walk to the High Street in Fletton, where you'll find the **Wonky Donkey** micropub. This modern, basic bar had a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and four cask ales. I drank the Dark Star American Pale Ale, which had a malty start, with biscuit notes and a long bitter finish.

On the way back to the city centre, I lost my bearings. I asked directions from a guy getting into his car. He kindly gave me a lift. He was from Setubal in Portugal and seemed pleased when I told him I had been there and that I thought the old town and fortress were very pretty.

I got off very near Charters Bar, so returned there. I really like Oakham Green Devil, so I bought a pint of that. This one had a big alcohol kick to it, but there was plenty of citra in the mouth feel and ending too.

Well, there was still a bit of time, so I went back to the Oakham Tap. It was really busy, with quite a young crowd. I ordered another Citra, however, this tasted nothing like the one I had early doors!

It was bitter, with some lemon notes and long astringent finish. Perhaps I'd been served something else, which isn't good!

The replacement coach bombed it down the A47 and I was back home after a mixed day with some new pubs and good beer. Cheers."

Chris Greenwood



Ostrich



MILL HILL CASK & COFFEE

Award winning Independent family run micro pub based in Enderby

4 changing lines of cask ale dispensed direct from the cask

Real cider

Up to 10 lines of varying Craft beer

Open mic events / meet the brewer / street food / pie nights / quizzes and more

Opening times

Tuesday to Thursday 4-10.30pm

Friday 12-2pm, 4-10.30pm

Saturday 2-10pm

Sunday 1-5pm

**12-14 Mill Hill, Enderby,
Leicestershire LE19 4AL**

Rail Ale Steams to Success in 2022

Last year, after a two-year hiatus, the Rail Ale Festival returned to the Goods Shed at the Battlefield Line Heritage Railway, Market Bosworth as reported in *Leicestershire Drinker*.

Numbers have been crunched and the figures are in!

The festival was jointly run by the Battlefield Line Heritage Railway and the Hinckley and Bosworth Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) and was a success on all fronts. David Bates of Hinckley takes up the story.

“For the first time, we had a charity collection at the bar so people could donate their spare change to the Feed the Hungry Ukraine Emergency Appeal.

We can now confirm, due to the drinkers’ amazing generosity, the total amount raised was £400!

This money will help people of the Ukraine fleeing the conflict, by providing mattresses, blankets, food and accommodation.

A special thanks is due to everyone who made this donation possible.

Overall, the festival seemed to go OK! We had (mostly) dry weather this time – a pleasant change, although we could’ve done without the 40°C on the Monday and Tuesday before. (You know which days we’re talking about!). It was far from ideal weather to work in whilst our volunteers were setting everything up, but they persevered nonetheless.

To help mark the Rail Ale’s return, the event was visited by



the local MP, Dr Luke Evans, who said: *“It was a pleasure to drop by the Market Bosworth Rail Ale Festival in July, meet volunteers from Hinckley and Bosworth CAMRA and see the passion on display by all who attended. Thank you to everyone who had given their time to help out and ensure the event was a huge success for our local branch.”*

“While there I had the distinct pleasure of sampling some of the wonderful ales and ciders on offer, but more importantly enjoy a drink with those who have a love for beer and socialising. I look forward to future CAMRA events in our area, and hope to be invited again!”

Both the Battlefield Line and CAMRA would like to thank Dr Evans for giving of his time to visit us.

So, what did our customers drink? Four dozen bottles of wine, 22 fruit ciders, all of the Prosecco and nearly all of the Pimms. We started off with 25 real ciders. The first one to sell out on Friday was Farmer Jim’s Rhubarb Bob. By close on Sunday there was very little cider left!

On the beer front, we started with 72 casks from 28 breweries. A Festival Special from Buswell’s at the Lime Kilns Brew Pub; the Old’n’Gold’n’Glow - was the first to run out on Friday night. Saturday saw a lot more sell out but we opened on Sunday still with a reasonable choice of five ciders and 23 different beers. The remaining unsold beers were in the usual location – the far side of the goods shed. This has nothing to do with the beer, just that a lot

of people start by the door and don't make it that far!

In total, 4,050 of the 4,680 pints were sold which meant a far smaller amount going to waste than in previous years. Nobody likes seeing good beer go to waste! Despite the numbers attending, the festival went without incident, demonstrating that the majority of the British public are responsible drinkers.

Thanks to Bobbley's Brizzly, Grizzly, Brutus Beefcake, Barber Stomping, Oompah Band for donating their time to provide entertainment on a Saturday afternoon and help make the event a success. The railway's new track side patio seemed popular with visitors too!

Finally, we would like to thank everyone that volunteered but especially those who gave up so much of their time beforehand to organise the festival. and everyone who took the time to visit and make it a success.

The next *Leicestershire Drinker* should have the dates for the next Rail Ale Festival (see also our website and battlefieldline.co.uk)”.



Dr Luke Evans at the Rail Ale Festival

THE STILTON CHEESE INN

Open 7 Days

12-3, 6-11 (Sun 7-11)

Extensive Menu Served

12-2, 6 (Sun 7)-9

30+ Malt Whiskies



- Melton & District CAMRA Pub of the Year 2015,2016,2019,2020,2022
- Leicestershire, Rutland & Northants 2015
- East Midlands 2019
- 5 Real Ales, 2 Permanent, 3 Changing, 1 Changing Real Cider

High Street, Somerby, Nr. Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 2QB

01664 454394 – stiltoncheeseinn.co.uk



A warm welcome to our customers, old and new!

We look forward to seeing you to enjoy fine ales, ciders and home cooked food including our Sunday carvery.

**Traditional Pub
and Restaurant**



**Supporting Local
Microbreweries**



198 London Rd, Leicester LE2 1NE

0116 2548384 theoldhorse666@hotmail.com

Mild in May

CAMRA celebrates mild beer during May and most branches organise something around any pubs still selling mild. If you are over 60 you may remember when mild was sold everywhere and was a popular drink. Many younger people will not know what mild is or was. 'Mild' used to mean fresh and not aged.

Out of fashion now, mild is not widely available in many areas but to promote it during May, some pubs participate in CAMRA's Make-Mine-Mild campaign. These beers are light drinking and not very hoppy or strong and were popular with people who wanted to quaff ale for long periods. Most milds are under 4%.

Nowadays there are different kinds of milds if you can find them. They vary in colour from light or pale milds to dark milds and they can be very, very dark. You can find pale amber or even gold milds but also brown to black.

These beers differ from bitters and pale ales in that they are at most only very lightly hopped and may be malty with a fruit background. The sweet malty beers have a flavour hard to describe but with hints of butterscotch, caramel or toffee (for those interested this is probably diacetyl).

Dark milds include roasted notes of chocolate, coffee and liquorice and the long-lost Vaux mild was just like a liquorish drink.

Not only have the milds gone, but most of the breweries that made them have gone as well or are part of larger conglomerates. Robinsons, Wilson's and Dutton's to name but three.



Milds have actually been replaced in the pantheon of beers by what we now know of as session beers. Not much stronger certainly no more than 4.5%, these are normally blond or pale beers sometimes classed as golden. The major difference is, these beers have some hoppiness and no malty fruitfulness. These are in effect weaker cousins of much stronger but similar ales which are available. These can be as strong as 7%.

There are of course even stronger products perhaps technically beers but verging on barley wines. They might be classed as heavy beers and could include stouts and porters.

Roy Denney





SHOULDER OF MUTTON - FOXTON

PUBLIC HOUSE & ACCOMMODATION

REAL ALES LOVINGLY CARED FOR & LOVELY HOME COOKED FOOD

PLUS 6 HOMELY ROOMS TO RENT WITH ENSUITE BATHROOMS - FROM JUST £85 PER NIGHT - CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST INCLUDED ALSO!!



60 MAIN STREET, FOXTON LE16 7RB
MARKET HARBOROUGH

01858 681080
WWW.SHOULDEROFMUTTONFOXTON.CO.UK

PUB IS OPEN WEDNESDAY TO SUNDAY ; ACCOMMODATION IS OPEN 7 DAYS - TO SEE COMPLETE OPENING TIMES PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE

FACEBOOK: SHOULDER OF MUTTON - FOXTON



10 great reasons to join CAMRA

1 CAMPAIGN
for great beer, cider and perry

2 Become a
BEER EXPERT

3 Enjoy CAMRA
BEER FESTIVALS
in front of or behind the bar

4 **GET INVOLVED**
and make new friends

5 Save
YOUR LOCAL

6 Find the
**BEST PUBS
IN BRITAIN**

Get great
7 **VALUE FOR
MONEY**

8 **DISCOVER**
pub heritage and the
great outdoors

Enjoy great
9 **HEALTH BENEFITS**
(really!)

10 **HAVE YOUR SAY**

What's yours?

Discover your reason
and join the campaign today:

www.camra.org.uk/10reasons



Campaign
for
Real Ale

SHOW YOUR COLOURS



Leicester CAMRA Branch has just launched a mini-shop on its website leicester.camra.org.uk with a range of garments to choose from.

They have two embroidered logos as shown. The fox is on the breast and the CAMRA logo is on the sleeve.



From T-Shirts through to Parkas, in various colours and sizes, there should be something for everyone.

Note: On some fabrics the logos are transfer printed.



**POLO SHIRT - COLLEGE HOODIE - PARKA
OUTDOOR FLEECE - BEANIE - FLEECE GILET
RUGBY SHIRT - SWEATSHIRT**

Available from leicester.camra.org.uk

What is a Good Pub?

There is no answer to that, as it is a subjective judgement and we probably all have a different idea as to what constitutes one. In simple terms I start from three basics - clean, welcoming and good beer after that you can throw in value and things in winter like a roaring fire and in summer, nice gardens. Detractions? Loud music, loud fruit machines, loud people. My favourite pastime is good conversation in a good pub and I have put the world to rights hundreds of times.

Many people have a hobby of collecting things as I do, but I collect good pubs. I don't buy them and take them home but I do keep their details. At its peak, my website had my 1,500 favourite pubs and as I discounted any, I did not rate I hate to think how many pubs I have been in over a lifetime. For over 50 years I travelled extensively with several different leisure endeavours and always tried whatever was on offer nearby. I have for now at least abandoned my website with pubs closing so often and so many changes of licensees and chefs. I used to discard them if neither I nor a trusted friend had been in them in five years but in recent years that went to ten years as we travelled less but now if it was ten months, it would be no guarantee that the information was current.

I rated pubs 1 to 9 but 1 was very poor, listed just because it was well located where there was nothing better. 2 to 4, better but lacking in some way, and 5 a perfectly acceptable decent pub. 6 was a well-located, attractive establishment with friendly staff offering very good food and drink at fair prices; 7 a really good pub well worth going out of your way for and 8 a great one. 9 was hard to improve.

I find the *Good Beer Guide* useful but not entirely reliable and even some of our own entries this year are wrong before it hit the streets. One thing it never does is to say how good a pub is for obvious reasons.

So, which do I think were and hopefully are my favourite English pubs. There are hundreds of

good town-centre or generally urban pubs in my old guide but the ones I consider gems and scoring very highly are in more remote places generally; oases in villages mostly in hill country or along or near the coasts which gives you clues to my other interests.

If you visit one you may be disappointed, having different requirements. I do though think I have a good knowledge of pubs. When I was a lending banker, in the days when such creatures still existed, I financed many pubs and turned down even more and since then I have been chairman of a licensing committee. I have also spent a lifetime checking pubs out personally.

In earlier editions I have given honourable mention to ones closer to home so I will give you a steer towards more distant ones (not in Leicestershire or Rutland).

Here are a few I consider classic. There are many more of course but for my money these are musts if anywhere nearby. Cornwall, Dorset and Devon are famous for their great pubs but pick of them?

The **Blue Anchor** in Helston is an unspoilt 15th-century brew house, how they used to be, with occasional traditional music.

In the southern areas I rate three in Hertfordshire and some in Anglia as being top of the tree. The **White Horse**, Burnham Green and the **Brocket Arms** in Herts are well worth finding. The latter is in Ayot

St Lawrence and is a 14th-century classic in Hertfordshire's loveliest hamlet - many listed buildings including the home of George Bernard Shaw. The **White Horse** is also in a lovely rural village and is an all-round good pub with gardens. The **Horns**, Bulls Green makes up the Herts. trio, again a charming country pub in hamlet backwater.

In Anglia, my pick of many is the **Ship**, in Dunwich, renowned for its fish and chips. A busy former smuggler's Suffolk inn, in a vanishing medieval port, most of which is now under the sea



From top, Watermill, Ings
Blue Anchor, Helston



L-R White Horse, Burnham Green, Brocket Arms, Welwyn

about a quarter of a mile out. Next to go will be the church.

Moving north in the rather built-up village of Bingham near Nottingham we have the superb **Horse & Plow** in a former Methodist chapel, now cottage style with flagged floor, many ales to choose from and an upstairs restaurant.

In southern parts of the Peak District, you have the **Cock & Pullet**, high on the moors above Ashford; about five miles away the **Church**, at Chelmorton and a bit further over the Olde **Cheshire Cheese**, at Longnor. All take some finding but it is worth it.

In the Dark Peak the **Old Nags Head** in Edale is a walkers' institution on the edge of the Kinder massif and at the start of the Pennine Way. Following that long-distance walking route, you would eventually get close to three great pubs and if walking, be desperately in need of some 'medication' sold by the pint in these establishments. The first two are actually right on the Dales Way the walkers' trail from Ilkley to the Lake District. First, you would come to the **Craven Arms**, in Appletreewick in Wharfedale, then near to the head of the Wharfe and deep into the moors, the **George**, at Hubberholme. Further north near Ingleborough and the Yorkshire Three Peaks there is the **Game Cock**, at Austwick.

Talking of moors there can be nowhere more remote than one of the highest pubs in England, the **Lion Inn**, high on Blakey Ridge. A moor top oasis on the coast-to-coast long-distance footpath, west of Rosedale Abbey.

In the far north, you would struggle to find one better than the **Ship** at Low Newton, by the

Northumberland coast. It is a National Trust owned microbrewery in a quaint fishing hamlet just north of Alnwick. On the west side of the Pennines, we do of course find the Lake District with many fine hosteleries but a lot pandering to tourists and not what I call genuine 'pubs'.

There are such pubs though, where locals and more engaged visitors mix and enjoy what pubs should be. Best of these are probably the **Black Bull** in Coniston, **Britannia** in Elterwater, **Watermill** in Ings, near Windermere and the **Old Dungeon Gill** in Langdale. The best time to visit them all is early and late in the year when not crowded but the Black Bull has roaring open fires, good value food and brews its own range of beers. The Brit is located right in the heart of the high mountain area and the Old Dungeon Gill is a long-standing down-to-earth Mecca for climbers in heart of high peaks; an institution without doubt.

The Watermill is on the approach to the area and is a great journey break and when I last stayed there, I experienced a hobby I had never come across before or since, a phenomenon, apparently found in parts of the far north. I experienced a story-telling competition with two teams trying to out-story each other. Another traditional pub competition you still see in the dog months of the year when pubs are not crowded is bull-ring. Not bullfighting but a three-inch solid ring as put through bulls' noses, tied on a length of string not quite hanging to the floor and six feet from a hook on the wall. You have to get the ring on the hook and the best way is to send the ring swinging out sideways in a great loop. You see why it is not played in crowded pubs.

Roy Denney

Images CAMRA and Creative commons

The Free Trade Inn is a traditional pub in the heart of the village of Sileby, serving quality drinks, with a great choice of real ales.

This delightful Grade II listed building dates back to the 16th century and is full of character and charm as well as being haunted (allegedly).

Outside there is ample car parking and large secure garden for families with children. The pub is also dog friendly.

Inside there is always lots going on, with regular music nights and monthly quiz.

THE FREE TRADE INN



Quiz Night first Tuesday of each month.
Open Mic second Wednesday of each month.
Live Music every Saturday night.
freetradeinn.sileby@outlook.com 01509 814494

THE FREE TRADE INN · COSSINGTON RD · SILEBY · LEICESTERSHIRE · LE12 7RW

The Anne of Cleves is a beautiful pub in the charming Leicestershire market town of Melton Mowbray. This 14th century pub is steeped in history and is known primarily for being given to Anne of Cleves by King Henry VIII as part of their divorce settlement.

It has recently undergone a lovely interior refurbishment, and the outside has had a major facelift, enabling our guests to enjoy drinks and food, in the gorgeous gardens.

All our delicious home cooked food is made using the freshest locally sourced ingredients.

ANNE OF CLEVES



Delicious food (see website for menu & times).
Beautiful gardens and patio area.
Music every other Friday.
info@theanneofcleves.com 01664 668955

ANNE OF CLEVES · BURTON ST · MELTON MOWBRAY · LEICESTERSHIRE · LE13 1AE

Deserts

What is a desert? We tend to think of sand everywhere and camels wandering about. You would though, be wrong on several counts. The only place where camels roam entirely free is Australia and the outback is not really desert if not far from it and getting more so. A desert can be defined as a large area of land that has very little liquid refreshment, where very few plants or creatures can survive. Technically, they are arid ecosystems that receive fewer than 25 centimetres (10 inches) of precipitation a year. One of the biggest deserts in the world by that definition is the heart of Antarctica.

For our purposes, a desert is an area where there is very little liquid refreshment fit to drink, where we cannot find any real ale. There are parts of several towns where you will find no pubs as an early conveyance from a large estate for houses to be built had a covenant prohibiting any licensed premises on the land. Another form of beer desert is where a major brewery has a near-absolute monopoly and only produces a beer which very few people like. The locals get used to it but visitors beware. Nowadays even areas of monopoly have bowed to demand and there is some choice of ales. The last big example of a beer desert I remember was the monopoly brewer, Norwich Brewery. They had much of Anglia sewn up and their beer was not great. Originally a choice was available with Morgans, Bullard's and Stewart and Patterson's but in the sixties, take-overs saw them owned by the late and unlamented Watney Man who formed Norwich in the early seventies to start brewing cask conditioned again but it was not good.

There are or were also areas with very limited drinking time where presumably there had been a history of excesses. You effectively have a time desert and I can remember a period when places in the North East of England closed at 9pm or at

best 10pm and the same applied in parts of Scotland.

Back then I did not know much about beer except what I liked or disliked so I cannot say how what was produced was made but it was widely disliked by other than locals. In the big central towns and cities of Scotland, Tennent's or McEwan's lager seemed to be mostly what was on



Hunters Moon, Llangattock Lingoed



Bridge End Inn, Crickhowell

offer and in the North East it was Federation Ales, I think, a weak real ale of sorts. In the late sixties when I started visiting Cumbria (Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness back then) it was sometimes state produced beer on offer. In World War One, the government was so worried by the drinking of munitions workers in Carlisle that it nationalised the local brewery and pubs to try and control things and that lasted until the 1970s when I think it was Theakston's bought the brewery.

The biggest real ale deserts in my youth though were Scotland and Wales. In Scotland most drinking seemed to be in dodgy bars or posh hotels or at home, and in Wales it was in clubs. Scotland had a real ale producer in Alloa Brewery but you struggled

to find any and I don't know what the Welsh drank in their clubs.

As a mountaineer, North Wales, Anglesey and Snowdonia were my haunts and slowly Robinsons and John Willie Lees from the Manchester area started opening pubs in North Wales so we were OK in the week but all pubs had to shut on Sundays in some counties on religious grounds. Of course, after Chapel, many members of the choir would immediately go from chapel to the choir club and neck whatever they had there.

In Scotland, I recall one night moored in Arisaig Bay and, having a night ashore in a B&B, we went into the lean-to drinkers' bar attached to the local hotel to pass the time waiting for the midnight

Deserts

shipping forecast to see if the seas had subsided. At 10pm on the dot, time was called and they came round collecting our pots even with the drink in them: No drinking up time! We have never drunk beer so fast since. The cultural shock was still to come though. The seas were rough as there had been a massive storm two days earlier but the weather was actually fine and we ended up sunbathing after being obliged to leave the pub for the night and the sun was just still visible at midnight. It was Spring Bank Holiday at the end of May.



Kings House, Glencoe

With the restrictions of hours in Scotland, they developed the habit of chasers; a pint of heavy and a wee dram o' whisky, but I happened to be in Scotland doing some white water canoeing the day the licensing rules were relaxed and pubs opened beyond 2pm at lunchtime. That Sunday the men kept drinking as they had before, but for much longer, and there were bodies flat out all over the place.

Things have now changed and in both Wales and Scotland there are some excellent pubs and many small brewers. Of the many, a few suggestions if you are anywhere nearby. In Wales the **Hunters Moon** in Llangatock Lingoed, Gwent, is a 13th-century gem hidden in a tiny hamlet. It is a great allrounder with a good garden area with great views. The **Sloop Inn**, Porthgain, Pembrokeshire is as well and is a genuinely unique old pub hidden in a remote bay west of Fishguard. The

Bridge End Inn, Crickhowell, Powys is a friendly 16th-century coaching inn by the River Usk and there are two really good pubs in Solva on the Pembrokeshire coast. The **Harbour Inn** is a quayside haven in this lovely village and the nearby **Cambrian Inn** has lovely gardens.

Scotland has some truly magical pubs

in very remote places which would justify an article of itself but some classics include the famous or infamous **Drovers Inn** at Inverarnan, Ardlui, Lomond. This rustic 'Gillies' retreat makes the term full of character an understatement. The first time I asked for a pint of ninety shillings the man-mountain behind the bar looking down on me said "you WILL be having a wee dram as well" I was not going to argue with him. Decorated in a typical hunting lodge style it is a renowned stop for hikers and bikers. Full of history and ghosts, in many ways rough and ready but not one you could ever forget. Rob Roy was a customer.

The **Kings House** above Glencoe is another great pub popular with walkers and climbers. Dating back to the 17th century, it was a barracks after Culloden for the King's officers who kept the "Highlanders" in order. Not far away is the **Clachaig Inn** but this was MacDonalds' Clan country and they were massacred by Campbells working for the King. This is an even better pub with multiple ales on offer and several snug bars.

Roy Denney

Images Wikimedia Commons / Creative Commons

Love beer?
Love pubs?

CAMRA membership is for you!
Join here



HOME OF ANSTEY ALES

NEW BREWERY NOW OPEN

4a Falcon Business Park

Meadow lane, Loughborough, LE11 1HL

stuart.monstex@btinternet.com



THE MASH & PRESS BREWERY TAP & CIDER HOUSE

46a Albion St, Anstey, Leicestershire, Le77de

mashandpress@yahoo.com



Morrismen, Pubs & Real Ale in

Forty five years ago (1977) the Leicester and Loughborough branches of CAMRA produced a local Real Ale Directory. The present treasurer of Leicester CAMRA, a major player in the local Morris scene, has brought this to our attention which makes interesting reading. The editor of this directory, Nick Hawkins, in his preface wrote:

"From Froth ... The last three years have witnessed a great revival of interest in the traditional draught beers of this country. As a result of this renewed interest, once forgotten brews have become the widely known trendy drinks of a new generation of beer drinkers."

At the time (1977) there were *"...34 different beers from 15 different breweries available in Leicestershire and Rutland, including the strong Ruddles County and Burton Ale and some of the very best of the Midlands dark milds. Admittedly several of the beers in this tremendous selection have only a limited representation - Hoskins excellent ales can only be found in one tied house - but many others are found in strength. Bass and Marston for example, have over two hundred pubs between them mainly in the North and West. Nearly all their pubs serve at least one traditional draught beer. Indeed, west of Leicester, M&B Mild, Draught Bass and Marston's Pedigree must be regarded as the 'local' drinks."*



He also makes reference to in the north of the county *"the strong representation from two of the Nottingham brewers - Shipstone and Home - who both preserve an almost completely traditional outlook to the brewing and presentation of their fine ales."* And in the east to *"the large number of pubs owned by either Ruddle or Samuel Smith and virtually all serve some draught beer"*.

In 1977 only two firms were brewing in the county *"Hoskins and Ruddle. Everards brewed in Leicester up until 1931. Ind Coope, Ansell, Bass, M&B, Courage and Marston have all taken over small breweries in the county and now, between them, own the majority of outlets."*

The directory or guide divided into seven sections, each covering one of the then new Districts of the county (as it was then), plus Leicester itself.

Blaby, Oadby & Wigston	15 pubs
Charnwood	85 pubs
Harborough	71 pubs
City of Leicester	61 pubs
Melton Mowbray	33 pubs
North West Leicestershire	89 pubs
Rutland	29 pubs

All the towns and villages that had real ale pubs are shown on the map that accompanied each



Hoskin's Brewery, Beaumanor Road, Leicester



Leicestershire & Rutland

section, with a street map showing numbered pubs for the city to aid location.

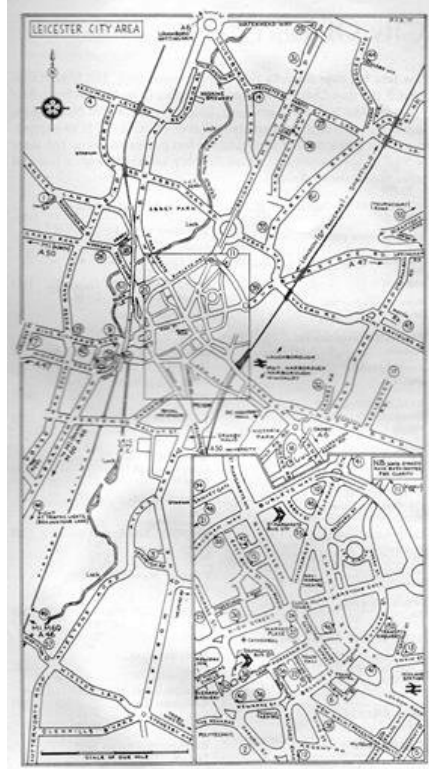


Interestingly there is a note in the 1977 guide that says: "As this guide is going to press we [have] learn that Everards are test marketing a range of draught beers. They have installed handpumps in The Globe, Silver Street, Leicester and are serving draught versions of their Mild, Beacon, Tiger and Old Original. We have been reliably informed that these are cask conditioned beers served without any form of CO2 pressure. Who knows, perhaps the third edition of this guide will list 100 everard pubs serving good ale!"

In 1977 the information provided was very functional.

KEY TO SYMBOLS			
GBG	Selected for the 1977 Good Beer Guide	G	Straight from cask.
GFG	Selected for 1977 Good Food Guide.	H	Handpump
Sn	Cobs, Sandwiches, Pies and Bar Snacks.	E	Electric pump.
M	Full meals available.	1	Mild
Co	Car Park.	2	Ordinary bitter
Gd.	Garden or outside area suitable for children.	3	Strong bitter
Ch	Indoor room for kids.	4	Barley Wine

Looking through this 1977 Guide, and looking back at the pubs that Leicester Morrismen have danced at since the 1950s (details available at leicestermorrismen.co.uk/have-we-danced-at-a-venue-near-you) it is remarkable how many



once vibrant pubs have closed or have changed use.

In a future edition of the Drinker Charlie hopes to provide a digest of closures based on the 1977 Guide for each area. I would welcome volunteers with local knowledge to assist with this undertaking. On a positive note It would be helpful if we could also provide recent additions to our local map of venues offering good real ales and ciders. If you are interested in helping with this review please contact me via editor@leicsdrinker.camra.org.uk

The guide was produced by members of Loughborough, Leicester and Rutland Branches of CAMRA.

Artwork reproduced here was supplied for the original by Richard Berridge and Brian Bartle and the maps produced by Roger West.

A Warm Welcome at THE RAILWAY INN



The Railway Pub near Leicester is a recently refurbished, traditional village inn which serves up a delicious range of classic pub food as well as our soon-to-be-famous Sunday Roast.

You can also enjoy our range of 2-4-1 cocktails and our competitively priced beers in our bar, lounge and epic beer garden, whilst watching your favourite sports on our brand new big screens!

Come along and rediscover your local pub in Glenfield, Leicester.

Our opening times are Mon-Thu 11-11, Fri and Sat 11-12, Sun 11-11



152 Station Rd, Glenfield Leicester LE3 8BR

Tel 0116 2161557 • www.greatukpubs.co.uk/railway-inn-glenfield

Thousands of Breweries and Pubs Face Closure

There are growing fears that 2023 could see a wave of company collapses as the cost-of-living crisis continues.

New data published by accountants Begbies Traynor, indicates thousands of businesses including breweries and community pubs are still battling the legacy impact of Covid debt and are deeply troubled by inflation.

The insolvency specialist says nationally more than 57,000 businesses, across all sectors, are now on the brink and operating under significant financial distress – a 20 per cent rise from the same pre-pandemic period in 2019 (47,653).

The Red Flag Alert data, published by the company has analysed the health of companies across the country for more than 15 years.

Nationally, more than 600,000 firms are now in significant financial distress. Begbies Traynor partner Gary Lee said: “The difference between pre-pandemic business conditions and now is stark. These figures highlight the gloom in the economic climate since the pandemic.

“Company directors must stay alert and act quickly and decisively as we progress into 2023 which is already bringing its own challenges.

“It’s clear that business owners are working hard to tackle rising inflation, soaring energy bills and doing their best to ward off the impact of what looks like a looming global recession but in too many cases it won’t be enough.”

In an interview with the BBC, Paul Jones, co-founder of brewery Cloudwater, said the pressure was immense.

Jones said his Manchester-based company has been in survival mode since March 2020, with high costs, debt, low consumer confidence and post-Brexit trading problems all bearing down on the business.

“The cost to me has been pretty bleak,” he said. “I have a heart condition from stress and I feel constantly on the edge of what I can personally cope with.”

His thoughts have turned to closing his business “probably once a month since 2020”, he said.

“I feel like continuing is either not possible or not worth it,” he said. “We’re going to keep going. What else can we do?”



The vast majority (80 per cent) of the beer traditionally produced by small breweries is sold in local pubs within 40 miles of the brewery, says SIBA the trade association for smaller brewers.

SIBA said: “The hospitality sector is under intense pressure from the lingering impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the combined energy and cost of living crisis.

“Nearly 400 pubs closed for good in 2022 in England and Wales and the number of them in the UK has fallen 25 per cent since 2000. The UK also lost 160 active breweries during the pandemic and in 2022 80 small independent breweries closed for good.”

CAMRA is calling for the government to give support to pubs and breweries in the March Budget.

National chairman Nik Antona said: “It is vital the chancellor uses his Budget in March to announce a wider support package if pubs are to survive and thrive.

“This must include proper reforms to fix the unfair burden of business rates and introducing the new lower rate of duty charged on draught beer and cider at 20 per cent below the general duty rate.

“This would help keep pub-going affordable for customers and give our locals a fighting chance against the likes of cheaper supermarket alcohol,” said Nik.

Timothy Hampson

What is a Micropub?

OK, so in trying to understand what a micropub is and what it is not, a number of other questions arise. Such as, why they only happened when they did and not sooner? In 2005 changes to the law made it easier to change the use of a premises from shop to pub rather than the sadly all too common opposite way around. This was of course called "The 2003 Licensing Act", presumably the discrepancy with the date is a government ploy to make the rules more difficult to find. In spite of this devious ploy, the first micropub opened the same year. The **Butcher's Arms** in Herne, Kent was and indeed remains a very small one-room pub based on good ale and good banter.



Inside the Butcher's Arms

Now originally my title said revolution rather than evolution but I think evolution is a better fit, or we would surely have five hundred odd very small one-room pubs based on good ale and good banter... in Kent. As with any process of evolution, it starts off small and then if successful it reproduces but the features may change over time and it is difficult to define at which point it becomes a new species. Now, different species are like

horses and donkeys and while they may be able to breed, the resulting mule or hinny is infertile... I'm not sure where this analogy is going other than it will probably result in the spillage of beer so I will leave it now. As time went by more micropubs were established across the nation

A warm welcome awaits you



The Salmon



The Kings Head



- The Salmon**
19 Butt Close Lane, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE1 4QA
10 hand pump real ales and 2 real ciders.
- The Kings Head**
36 King Street, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE1 6RL
11 hand pump real ales and 1 real cider.



Great beer,
proudly brewed in the
Black Country.

...and What is Behind the Micropub Evolution?

and in 2012 some of them got together and as the Micropub Association they announced that they knew what a micropub was, it was “a small freehouse which listens to its customers, mainly serves cask ales, promotes conversation, shuns all forms of electronic entertainment and dabbles in traditional pub snacks”. Mainly serves cask ale? How do I qualify this? A

count of cask versus keg lines? But “craft kegs” are usually smaller than firkins. Maybe we need the full accounts of the establishment to be displayed on the bar? And what about all forms of electronic entertainment? Little bit of unobtrusive background music?

Someone gets their phone out? Or does this mean fruit machines? Space invaders? (giving away my age).

In 2017 “The Micropub Guide: Enjoying the Pint-Sized Pub Revolution” was published. I haven’t read it but this is the synopsis: “Here is the definitive guide to the UK’s micropubs: small, owner-managed pubs with an uncompromising focus on cask-conditioned craft beers and ales, personal service and good conversation. No electronic games; no table football; no gassy beer or lager; only the simplest bar snacks”. Hang on, five years ago we were listening to customers, now we are uncompromising? How gassy is gassy? Is there a limit to the level of dissolved carbon dioxide? OK so things seem to be gradually changing as time goes by, electronic entertainment, which I was unsure if it included

“a small freehouse which listens to its customers, mainly serves cask ales, promotes conversation, shuns all forms of electronic entertainment and dabbles in traditional pub snacks”

unobtrusive background music, seems to have become electronic games and I am not sure why the author has singled out table football? I do know of a member of the Micropub Association that has a Skittles Alley! Anyhow, evolution is happening.

So, what have we learnt? I suspect very little! The author of the Micropub Guide has an issue with table football; can anyone tell me a pub that has table football? A micropub is not a mule! Due to its evolving state it is very difficult to

perfectly define what a micropub is. You’ll have to try some and make up your own mind.

What does the future hold for the micropub? What may it look like in the future? Well, when Alexander Graham Bell was promoting his marvellous invention – the telephone – one city’s mayor declared “What a wonderful invention, every town should have one”, a fine sentiment, it could as easily apply to micropubs, but let us hope in years to come that the micropub hasn’t evolved down a parallel path to the phone or else it may become some sort of online experience with mini casks and nobody wants that!

Paul Mossman



Local micropubs L-R Mill Hill Cask and Coffee, Enderby and Wheeltapper, Loughborough

**CAN I
KICK IT?
YES YOU
CAN!**



**NOW AVAILABLE IN CANS
ONLINE AND IN OUR SHOP**

EVERARDS.CO.UK

EVERARDS MEADOWS, COOPER WAY, LEICESTERSHIRE LE19 2AN