



# OVER THE BARREL

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Published by Northants **CAMRA** — the Northamptonshire Branch of **Campaign for Real Ale**

## **Bigger and Better Beer Festival**

Over 300 Beers for 2011 — see centre pages

## **One Year On...**

Whittlebury Brewery and the Wig & Pen



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**May — July 2011**

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# The Northamptonshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA)

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## About Northants CAMRA:

We are a local branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) representing the Northamptonshire area. We hold meetings, organise trips (e.g. breweries) and social events, and run an annual Beer Festival at Delapré Abbey.

Northamptonshire has its fair share of pubs — many of which serve Real Ale — from quiet village inns and friendly street-corner locals to busy town centre pubs and Gastropubs. As well as several small breweries or microbreweries which produce Real Ale, we even have producers of Real Cider and Perry right here in the county.

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**Over the Barrel** is published quarterly by the Northamptonshire branch of Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Views expressed herein are not necessarily those of CAMRA or its officers. May contain traces of nuts. Always drink responsibly — Ask if it's Cask. For best results chill before opening; keep away from children. If symptoms persist, please consult your doctor. This publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Sharealike (CC-BY-SA). You are free to copy and distribute it, and to make derivative works subject to certain conditions. For more details see <http://www.creativecommons.org> or the Northants CAMRA website. Advertisements and images from the Internet may have a different licence. Errors and Omissions Expected. Printed by AC Print, Tel: (01933) 400 679.

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## Great Oakley Brewery

Mike, at the Malt Shovel Tavern, asked if it was possible to brew a strong festival special for his event at the end of April.

**Anaesthetise** has been produced. It is a powerful 7.5% amber ale and is dangerously drinkable. Beware !

**Abbey Stout** (5.0%) won a Gold award in the stout and porters class at the Leicester Beer Festival.



**Whittlebury Brewery** celebrated their first Birthday on April 20<sup>th</sup>. John and Ray would like to thank everyone who has supported their beers in the last 12 months.

To celebrate their Birthday and the announcement of abandonment to the plans to sell-off the public forest estate, the Brewery has created **Whittlewood** (3.6%), a traditional Amber bitter.

The Brewery is located just north of **Whittlewood Forest**, a former medieval hunting forest.

## Meet the Brewers and their Beer

The Northamptonshire Beer Festival on 26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> May at Delapré Abbey is the place to try all the beers from Northamptonshire breweries (subject to availability).

Last year we were host to Phil & Hazel from Great Oakley, Paul & Kate from Nobby's, and Roy & Julie from Hoggleys, to name but a few. We expect this year to be no different.

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# OVER THE BORDER

From the world of beer outside our County boundaries



Map: Nifflation (Wife Commons) CC-BY-SA 3.0

## The Vale Brewery, Brill, Buckinghamshire

Vale Brewery has a pub in Northampton — The Victoria Inn, Poole Street.

April 2011 was a busy month — Easter, St George's Day and a Royal Wedding, all at the end of the month. With several Bank Holiday there were also many beer festivals planned. Vale Brewery created three special beers.

The first is another of their Monthly Special beers, **P & Q**. Named after the old saying "*Mind Your P's and Q's*", this is reputed to have derived from a cry heard by many a Landlord in a rowdy tavern: "*Mind your Pints and Quarts*". This 4.2% beer is Golden in colour with First Gold and Brewers Gold combining to create a subtle citrus hop aroma.

We then have **St George's V-Ale**. Those with good memories will recall this was first brewed last year. It is 4.6% and a traditional English bitter to celebrate our national day on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The beer is a deep reddish brown in colour.

And then there was the Royal Wedding on the 29<sup>th</sup> April. This caused a dilemma at Vale Brewery, since this is in fact their special day — or more precisely David Renton, the brewer's special day: his birthday. So for general consumption there was **Royal Union**, a golden beer brewed with Fuggles, Brewers Gold and Galena hops. This created a beer with a fruity taste and subtle blackcurrant aroma. However as a one off at **The Hop Pole** in Aylesbury only, there was a dry hopped version of this called "**Not the Royal Wedding Ale — It's David the Brewer's Birthday Ale**".

**Other News:** The bottled beers available at the **Vale Brewery Shop** in Brill continue to increase. Recent additions have been beers from **Oakham Ales** in Peterborough, **Teignworthy** from Devon and **Warwickshire Brewery**. Reasonably priced this is a great location to pick up some unusual ales, not often seen in bottle form in this area. For an up to date list of bottles available see the Vale Brewery website.

For immediate notification of new bottles, new Vale beers and up to date information why not become a friend of Vale Brewery on Facebook?

**Web Link:**

<http://www.valebrewery.co.uk>





# A note from the Chairman

**Northamptonshire CAMRA Beer Festival  
26<sup>th</sup> — 28<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at Delapré Abbey**

Not long to go for the biggest and best Beer Festival in the county.

In this edition of **Over the Barrel** you will find a staffing form and I urge you to spare us some time this year.

If you speak to anyone that has worked at the festival I will guarantee that they will tell you that they have had a great time. Without volunteers we don't have a festival and as we grow larger year on year the demands on the willing few gets greater.

This year the marquee will be situated further back on the south lawn which will give us much more space and allow the caterers to be further away from the stage. Some excellent bands have been booked for Friday night and all day Saturday.

All our costs have risen considerably as the festival has expanded and I hope you will be sympathetic to the fact that we have to make an admission charge of £3 for Friday and Saturday. Card carrying CAMRA members are admitted free to all sessions.

I look forward to seeing you there!

## **Another budget and another kick in the teeth for the pub trade.**

All the pleas and lobbying from CAMRA and leading trade organisations plus the support of a growing number of MPs came to nothing when Chancellor George Osborne ignored everyone and confirmed that the duty on alcohol would rise by 2% above the rate of inflation in line with the duty escalator put in place by his predecessor.

The increase comes on top of the rise in VAT on 4<sup>th</sup> January which ultimately means another hike in the price of a pint.

Continuing to increase taxes on draught beer, drunk in the socially responsible environment of the pub, will serve only to increase purchases of cheap vodka for unsupervised home consumption.

I fail to see how this policy can help tackle binge drinking.

*Phil Greenway*

Branch Chairman

## 9<sup>th</sup> Welland Valley Beer Festival

The weekend has been set and arrangements well underway for this year's 9<sup>th</sup> **Welland Valley Beer Festival** over the weekend Friday 10<sup>th</sup> — Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June.

Pubs from all around the valley will be taking part offering a superb range of beer, cider and perry plus a traditional selection of pub food and live entertainment.

Once again on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June a fleet of twelve heritage buses will be operating a FREE service to all the pubs taking part with connections at Market Harborough bus and railway stations for visitors attending from all over the United Kingdom.

Visitors are able to hop on and off as they wish and visit as many venues as they can in safety. An official festival programme will be published nearer the event to include the bus timetable, beer list and other useful information and will be on sale in all the festival pubs.

The Welland Valley Beer Festival format is unique there is no other beer Festival like it in Britain. Put the date in your diary for another splendid weekend in our charming local pubs. Please drink responsibly.

### Pubs taking part in 2011:

- Red Lion, Middleton
- Fox Inn, Wilbarston
- George & Dragon, Seaton
- Spread Eagle, Cottingham
- Queens Head, Sutton Bassett
- Talbot Inn, Gretton
- White Hart, Lyddington
- Neville Arms, Medbourne
- Royal George, Cottingham
- Marquess Of Exeter, Lyddington

### Web Link:

<http://www.wellandvalleybeerfestival.co.uk>



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## **“A Couple of Pleasant Surprises” by Adrian D. Stone** **Beer-related trip reports from Ljubljana and Istanbul**

My latest travels have taken me to the beautiful city of Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia. I have visited this city a number of times, but never been over excited by the two almost identical beers that are available in virtually all of the bars in the city. Union Pivo and Lasko divide the drinkers of Slovenia, but having done a little homework I found out that since 2006 they have been one and the same. That may explain the almost identical taste (or lack of it).

The concierge at my hotel displayed a genuine interest in my search for some craft beer, and promised to have something for me by the time I returned from my meetings. I was pleasantly surprised by the results. The concierge had prepared a small list of two establishments to visit, and also written instructions on how to find these places, in case of any confusion with taxi drivers.

Both of these were outlets of the same independent brewery, Kratochwill, so my first visit was to their new purpose built brewery and restaurant, situated at a huge retail park on the outskirts of the town. The set up was impressive with plenty of shining copper and steel, but felt rather impersonal. The beer however was excellent; I indulged in few glasses of Wheat Beer, then a few more of the malty Dark.

On my way back to the hotel I headed for the second bar situated amongst a row of offices in Kolodurska, which I was told was

the original brewery. This was more like it, it was like someone's front room, with a bar and a wood fired pizza oven crammed in. How they fitted a microbrewery in here as well was anybody's guess! This bar also sold a beautifully sweet Bohemian Pale Lager, of which I spent the rest of the evening sampling. The food in this homely bar was also worth a mention, with some fantastic sausage platters available offering a choice of six locally produced meat treats, with a selection of mustards. Fed and watered, I returned to my hotel a happy man.

The following afternoon when work had finished I was welcomed back into the hotel



**Photo:** katinho (flickr) BY-NC-SA

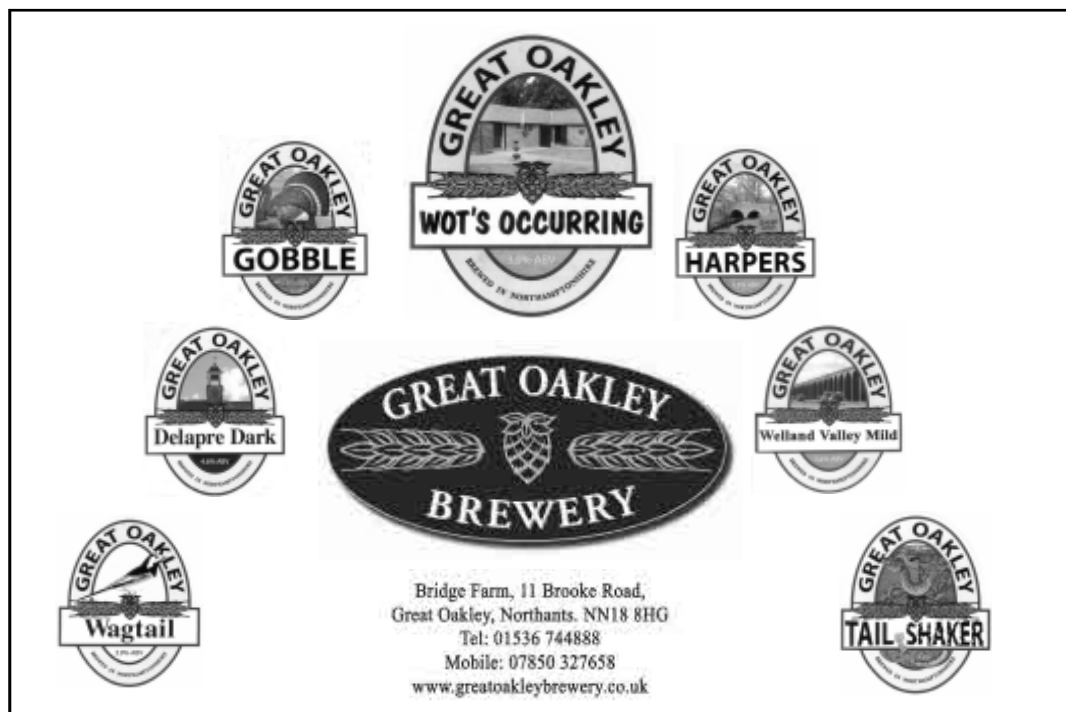
by the concierge who asked about the previous evening's excursion, and excitedly told me about a bar that he had found, within 200 metres of the hotel that sells beer from a very small brewery located in Slovenj Gradec in the north of the country. He explained that it was very rare to find this outside the two bars in its home town. My short walk was well rewarded, and a visit to Patricks Bar, (yes, unfortunately an Irish theme pub) gave me the opportunity to sample Human Fish Beers.

Simply named "Pale" and "Red", both of the standard beers were fresh and bursting with taste, both resembling German style beers. I was told that they also produce an Oatmeal Stout, but this had sold out. The Human Fish Brewery was set up by an

Australian and was oddly named after a strange blind reptile that lives solely in the caves at Karst. The staff and customers at this bar take beer very seriously and throughout the evening customers brought in bottles of unusual beers for their drinking buddies to taste and review. Unfortunately despite dropping hints the size of nuclear bombs I was not invited to join them. Luckily I had managed to consume enough beer not be totally disappointed.

On arriving back at the hotel afterwards, I retired happy, but not before rewarding the concierge with a hefty, (alcohol induced) but well-deserved tip.

Read about **Istanbul** on the following page...



The image displays the Great Oakley Brewery logo and several product labels. The central logo is an oval with "GREAT OAKLEY BREWERY" and a hop cone. Surrounding it are seven smaller labels: "GOBBLE", "WOT'S OCCURRING", "HARPERS", "Delapre Dark", "Welland Valley Mild", "Wagtail", and "TAIL SHAKER". Each label features the "GREAT OAKLEY" name and a small illustration. At the bottom, contact information is provided.

Bridge Farm, 11 Brooke Road,  
Great Oakley, Northants. NN18 8HG  
Tel: 01536 744888  
Mobile: 07850 327658  
[www.greatoakleybrewery.co.uk](http://www.greatoakleybrewery.co.uk)

For all postal correspondence relating to *Over the Barrel*, please write c/o Great Oakley Brewery

## Istanbul

Having just recovered from the excesses of Christmas, on Boxing Day I found myself dispatched to Istanbul, a vibrant city full of character and charm, but not much choice in beer. The city is completely dominated by Efes, the famous Turkish lager, more suited to quenching beach thirsts than serious drinking. During numerous previous visits, this small but vital aspect has been more than compensated for by the wonderful architecture and the secret restaurants, hidden away from tourists underneath the Galata Bridge. The bridge itself crosses the Golden Horn and is amass with fishermen who then sell their spoils to the restaurants.

This trip proved to be different. Following a quick call to let him know I was in town, I met up with an old friend of mine, Utku Thamis, who I met 10 years ago when he was working as an interpreter / guide whilst studying for his degree in tourism, and have met up with during every visit since. It was Utku that introduced me to the Galata restaurants, and sourced information on

the famous Whirling Dervishes for me to visit. He has also looked after friends and colleagues when visiting and is currently setting up his own travel and tourism agency. During this visit he had a real treat in store, we were going to follow the coast road to a suburb called Bebek, where there was situated an outlet of a craft brewery called “Taps”.

“Taps” was located overlooking the sea and despite being very popular offered very comfortable surroundings. The first thing that struck you on entry was the polished copper dispensers, inviting you to sample. The bar was selling a selection of 7 of the breweries products, and to help with the initial decision offered a tasting tray made up of a wine glass full (approx ¼ pint) of each. The range consisted of everything from very light Vienna lager, through to Red Ale, and to a dark Dunkel. My personal favourite was the Weiss beer, that was sweeter than most, whilst Utku enjoyed the very unusual Smoked Lager. This was not dark like any other smoked beers that I have encountered but was a light golden hue.

The whole experience was thoroughly enjoyable — all the staff in the bar were knowledgeable about their beers, and suggested to Utku that when his travel company is up and running he may be able to incorporate brewery trips in the schedules. (Details will be given here of course). Roll on my next visit!

*Adrian D. Stone*



Photo: Oberazzi (flickr) BY-NC-SA

# The Queen Adelaide

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## Triple Stamps 15 — 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2011 Report by Karl Tecklenberg

This year, the 15<sup>th</sup> Triple Stamps (so named as three breweries are visited offering three stamps in your *Good Beer Guide*) set off on a dry day, albeit with lots of cloud cover. With 32 on board, it wasn't long before we pulled up in the centre of Lechlade, just into Gloucestershire with the Thames providing a convenient border.

The **Crown Inn** (GBG) was our destination, which has been owned by Alan Watkins in partnership with his mother Valerie. They bought the Crown Inn over 10 years ago, and it had always been Alan's ambition to brew on the site ever since. So, two years ago the **Halfpenny Brewery** came into being, which was launched during their anniversary celebrations. Pub regulars were involved in naming the brewery and all the ales through a competition, with the names being inspired by Lechlade's landmark stone bridge which spans the River Thames. The micro-brewery was commissioned in December 2008, and is located in a newly refurbished building to the rear. On the bar were Old Lech, Thames Tickler, Anniversary, Ha'penny, Four Seasons, and Century Ale (their 100<sup>th</sup> brew). We had two trips around the brewery, which is a 4 barrel plant brewing three times a week utilising three fermenting vessels. Prior to their own beers being served, Wells Bombardier was popular, so Old Lech has been brewed to a similar taste. Back in the bar, copious amounts of the beers were sampled, with favourable reports being received by all. We thanked the brewer, and before long we were off to our second pub.

Crossing the border into Oxfordshire, we arrived at the **Radnor Arms**, (GBG), where the four barrel plant of the **Old Forge Brewery** has been installed in an old out-building. The Old Forge was converted into a pub in 1949, and is owned by the National Trust. All of the old tools used still remain in the old forge, now a public bar and dining area. On the bar were Anvil Ale, Blacksmith's Gold, Sledgehammer, and Hammered, a brew which

didn't quite work out right, but resulted in a lovely, dark chocolate ale. The opportunity for a look at the brewery was again offered, with Alan providing an insight to the delights of this small brewery. Talking of the pub again, the food looked absolutely scrumptious, and considering where we were, the prices were very reasonable, so do stop by if you are in the Cotswolds. We thanked Alan for his hospitality, and were rewarded with a bottle of Anvil.

The newest of the breweries today was next in **Faringdon**, which first brewed October 2010. A one barrel plant, it is situated behind **Swan**, where six beers were on. Unfortunately for us, their beers were popular the night before and had run out, so we had to make do with Oakleaf Blake's Gosport Bitter, Vale Special and Best Bitter, Hoggley's Kislingbury, Milestone Lion's Pride, and Elgoods Greyhound. Some of us did steal a visit to the plant out the back to see another beer ready for that night!

Our main brewery visit though was to **Wychwood**, which began brewing in 1983 and was then known as Glenny Brewery. In 1987 they moved to an industrial estate on Station Lane, Witney to allow further expansion. The name was changed to Wychwood in 1992. In October 1994 the brewery moved back to their original site, taking a larger portion of the old maltings. The brewery was taken over in the spring of 2002 by Refresh UK. With the closure of **Brakspear** in 2002, Refresh UK bought the



Photo: nicdafis (flickr) CC-BY-2.0

rights to the brands and in 2004 moved the original brewing equipment from Henley-on-Thames, including the famous double drop fermenters, into a newly purchased property adjacent to the Wychwood brewery. Expansion has led to a 110 barrel brew plant being used and subsequently Marston's in March 2008 purchased Refresh UK.

With a large party, we had two separate groups around the brewery, with the second tour lead by Martin, who proved to be a characterful guide which made the visit for us. We started with a half in the bar with a brief talk by Martin, who told us of the history of the brewery, which was once part of the Eagle Brewery in the 1800s, and that 37 different beers are brewed a year. We then headed off around the main brewery, viewing the mash tuns, copper, and 17 Fermenting Vessels. The highlight though was to see the former Brakspear's fermenters which use the unique double-drop system where two fermenters are emptied into a further bank below which re-invigorates the hopped wort and provides that biscuit taste that is unique to Brakspear's. Once finished, we retired to the bar where we had a taste sampling of further draught and bottled beers. Before long, our time was up and we were back out on Corn Street, where two GBG pubs can be found.

Whilst the first group were touring the brewery, those waiting for the 14.30 slotted in the **Eagle Tavern**, a Hook Norton pub which has their range on, although most tried the Double Stout which was pure nectar. Further down the road was the **New Inn**, where beers from just around the corner were available including Brakspear Bitter, Oxford Gold, and Hobgoblin.

Time for an early afternoon snooze now as we left Witney as dusk fell and headed for the **Masons Arms** (GBG), Oxford, home of the **Old Bog Brewery** who first brewed in January 2005. Actually reaching the pub put Andy, our driver, skills to the test with tight corners and many parked cars. The one barrel plant was previously at Bitter End Brewery, Cockermouth, Cumbria. A busy pub, aided with the football and

other sports showing on its TV's, five beers were on; Harviestoun Bitter and Twisted, Rebellion Mutiny, West Berkshire Good Old Boy, Old Bog Half Wit and Happy Daze, and Priors Well Silver Chalice.

Just outside Oxford is the village of Littleworth, where we made a brief visit to the **Cricketer's Arms** (GBG), in search of **Shotover** Prospect, from the brewery in the next village. We were in luck, although there were some other good beers on too.

We finished the day off in Thame, where the one barrel **Thame Brewery** can be found behind the **Cross Keys** (GBG). Unfortunately they have not been brewing during the cold weather, so we were out of luck for sampling some of their own beers. Still, we had a choice of Concrete Cow Cow'Zat, Crouch Vale Blackwater Mild, Oakleaf Quercus Folium, Otley O-Garden, Sawbridgeworth IPA, and Vale BB, which washed down the local fish and chips quite admirably. So, that was another TS under the belt as we headed for home, making Northampton for 21.00. Thanks are due to Andy for getting us home safely through the near gale-force winds experienced on the A43. So, with the last few Triple Stamps heading north-west, south, and east, maybe next year we will have to head north to the East Midlands!

*Karl Tecklenberg*

Social Secretary

If you would like to know more about Triple Stamps and other Northants CAMRA social trips, contact the Social Secretary:

[social@northantscamra.org.uk](mailto:social@northantscamra.org.uk)

# Northamptonshire CAMRA Beer Festival

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> — Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May at Delapré Abbey, London Road, Northampton

## Volunteer Staffing Form 2011

	MON 23 <sup>rd</sup>	TUE 24 <sup>th</sup>	WED 25 <sup>th</sup>	THU 26 <sup>th</sup>	FRI 27 <sup>th</sup>	SAT 28 <sup>th</sup>	SUN 29 <sup>th</sup>
09:00 - 10:00							
10:00 - 11:00							
11:00 - 12:00							
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19:00 - 20:00							
20:00 - 21:00							
21:00 - 22:00							
22:00 - 23:00							
23:00 - 00:00							
Please tick boxes above where you are available to work:				Set-Up		Open	

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Please indicate your preferred area(s) to volunteer:

We need people for setting up / taking down, cleaning, general duties, glasses counter, and of course serving beer and cider.



Find Northants CAMRA on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/NorthantsCAMRA>



Please return to: Phil Greenway, c/o Great Oakley Brewery, Bridge Farm, 11 Brooke Road, Great Oakley, near Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 8HG or e-mail [beerfestival@northantscamra.org.uk](mailto:beerfestival@northantscamra.org.uk)

## Pub of the Season (Winter 2010)

The pub of the Season winner was the **Samuel Pepys** in the rural village of Slipton, near Thrapston, East Northants. The pub dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century built out of stone and painted white with flower baskets adorning the outside walls.



The pub consists of four rooms, the bar with a low-beamed ceiling and brick floor, a lounge / dining room also allow serving reasonable priced meals also with a low-beamed ceiling with a bar and carpeted floor, a third room towards the rear with comfortable chairs to drink and chat in, the fourth room is a large conservatory restaurant serving à la carte food which can be reached directly from the large car park.

Doors from the lounge lead to a large garden — just the place on a warm summer's evening. As a free house the management are supporting CAMRA's LocAle scheme by serving beers from local Brewers Potbelly, Digfield and Oakham, also beers from other micro brewers from round the country.

With six hand pulls on the bar and any beer in the cellar if ready giving a pretty good choice don't be afraid to ask for beer from the cellar. This enthusiasm was noted by CAMRA members and thus voted pub of the Season. The bar manager / cellar man is local lad Chris Ellis who graduated from Newcastle University in Journalism, was offered this job and as one says the rest is history, Chris is supported by five very pleasant staff.



Who would have thought it's one year since the re-opening of the Wig & Pen?

See their advert on the back page.

# Northamptonshire CAMRA Beer Festival

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> — Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May  
at Delapré Abbey, London Road, Northampton



Featuring Beers from all the  
Northamptonshire Breweries

Over 300 Real Ales, plus Real Cider and Perry



## Thursday

17:00 — 23:00 Free Admission

## Friday

12:00 — 23:00 £3.00 Admission

Music from **Cousin Avi** and  
**The Peartree Bridge Family**

## Saturday

12:00 — 23:00 £3.00 Admission

Music from **The Outsiders**, **Great Divide**,  
**Nimming Ned**, **Velvet Texas Cannonball**,  
and **The David Cattermole Band**

**Free admission to all sessions for card-carrying CAMRA members.**

Regular bus services, alight at **London Road**, call 0871 200 22 33 for travel information.

For Sat-Nav use Postcode **NN4 8AW** or enter into your chosen online map service.



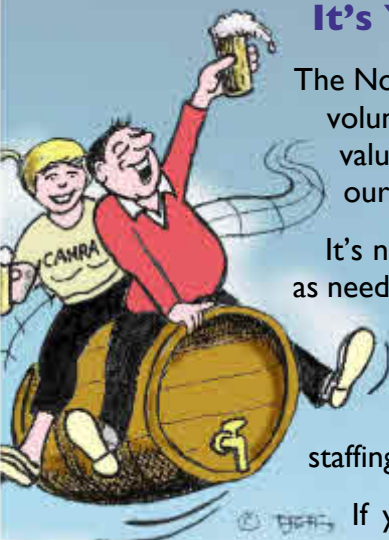
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Facebook**

[http://www.facebook.com/  
NorthantsBeerFest2011](http://www.facebook.com/NorthantsBeerFest2011)



Errors and Omissions Excepted. All beers and featured breweries are subject to availability. Cask Ale is a live product, and not all beers may be available to purchase at all sessions. A donation will be made to Friends of Delapré Abbey, a Registered Charity, No 1113979. Background Image: Edward Simpson (CC-BY-SA) <http://www.flickr.com/photos/king-edward/>

## It's YOUR beer Festival — Get Involved!



Cartoon by Frank Jeffs

The Northamptonshire Beer Festival is run entirely by unpaid volunteers who come from all walks of life and give up their valuable time to make the beer festival a success. Without our volunteers the Beer Festival would not happen!

It's not just bar work that we need volunteers for. As well as needing volunteers for the days the festival is open, we also need volunteers who can come along and help us to set everything up before the festival opens.

There is also the glasses and tokens stand which needs staffing during the festival to get people in and ready to drink.

If you feel you are able to help us in any way, please complete the staffing volunteer form inside this issue. You can also download a copy from our website:

<http://www.northantscamra.org.uk/downloads>

### Over the Barrel Advertising Rates

(Mono) Full Page £80   ½ Page £60   ¼ Page £40

(Colour) Inside £100   Back Cover £120

*pro-rata rates apply for ½ and ¼ page in colour.*

for further details contact:

[advertising@northantscamra.org.uk](mailto:advertising@northantscamra.org.uk)

Deadline for next issue: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011

Deadline for colour adverts: Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011

*Copy received after these dates will not be included.*

Northants CAMRA makes every effort to publish **Over the Barrel** approximately two weeks after the published deadline. From time to time, circumstances may mean that the publication date may be later than expected. Northants CAMRA cannot accept any responsibility for advertisements taken that feature a dated event that has occurred before the publication date.



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## Conference at Sheffield 2011 The CAMRA AGM through my eyes

by Mick Furn

On **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April**, and having pre-registered to attend and making in my hotel option through the CAMRA website.

Leaving mid morning, with rail tickets in hand, I started my journey to Sheffield aka the Holy City, because of the number of pubs in the Valley of beer.

My first thing on arrival, having briefly looked into the Thornbridge tap at Platform One on Sheffield Rail station, I headed and booked into my room.

Once done, I took the Stagecoach Supertram to University; by the way those with bus passes as visitors get free travel on the trams.

My first port of call prior to getting my registration pack at the Octagon Centre was to the University Arms, which pub wise is owned by the University.

On getting a beer from a new brewery Blue Bee Bees Knees 4.0%, and trying to find a seat, was greeted by someone in the branch known to me, by saying fancy seeing you in here!

I sat down whilst he being up for the day, was noting beers elsewhere mainly in the valley.

Having left to go down to those pubs, I had two more Two Roses First Edition 4.0, and Black Beauty 5.0%, the pub was having a mini BF with cellar runs.

Meeting up with a colleague fro the disbanded PTAG group, preceded to the Octagon Centre, picking my goody bag for the AGM, I then went straight to the members bar, taking in 3 more beers.

After which I proceeded to the Valley of the Beer, getting off at Shalesmoor with a first port of the KILT or Kelham Island Tavern, having the Thornbridge Branta, proceeded out the back to a garden BF, meeting again with someone else I knew. Leaving I noticed the familiar figure of the

NE Chair outside the pub, doing a pub campaign launch for TV.

My next port of call was the Fat Cat, yet another beer, before making my way to the Gardeners Rest and having another 2 new brewery's.

By the time I had consumed, I made the Wellington or Cask Welly my last call before the tram back to the hotel; here I had the West Berks WB 40.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April**, getting up and having had breakfast, and greeting others from the nearby MK branch in the Hotel, I took the tram to day one of the conference.

I having had a coffee, went into the AGM, and sat with our RD Julian Tubbs, and than sat through the proceedings of the first motions, plus guest speaker Chris Holmes of the Castle Rock Brewery.

We had covered 5 motions by the end of the day, results are elsewhere, this also saw elections of voting for the NE, and another committee.

Once fed I ended my day covering my tracks back to Gardeners Rest meeting up with friends from Birmingham, and Newcastle branches.

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April** Having an early night, and wanting to be alert for the remainder of the  
*(continued overleaf...)*



Photo: R~P~M (flickr) BY-NC-ND

(...continued from previous page)

motions, and the last one 14, which I had made some contribution to its wording.

The NE chair had promised that all remaining motions would be covered that morning, which also included NE members reports on state of GBBF and beyond 2012, and the branches which had gained most members, plus the Newsletter award going to Nottingham Drinker again, and Hereford branch getting the most improved, all of these awards to place between motions.

With “fors” and “againsts” taking up time the AGM was increased by 15 minutes, in order to allow the last motion to be heard.

The drama with this motion resulted in a need for the tellers to count the hands for, and against.

Leaving, and picking up my luggage, assuming we had lost the vote, I proceeded to get the tram to the rail station, and homeward bound.

Whilst waiting for the train, I saw a PTAG colleague on the station, where we went into a

long chat as to what I assumed would be to our loss, but was told the motion on counting was won by 6 votes, which will ensure a return of PTAG.

At the time of writing I am no further as to whether I will be involved, if the NE has a say in its structure.

I am hoping as I intend to seek sponsorship from Stagecoach for my bus pub crawls, in addition to this I have been involved with a bus crawl scheme done by Wadworth for their pubs.

As to the AGM a few familiar faces from the branch were not seen this year, but to add we were fortunate to have a HQ staff member Tom Stainer (editor of *What's Brewing*, and *Beer* magazine) also representing the branch in his introduction to the conference.

Mick Furn

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## **A man walks into a pub...**

A golf club walks into a bar and orders a pint of lager.

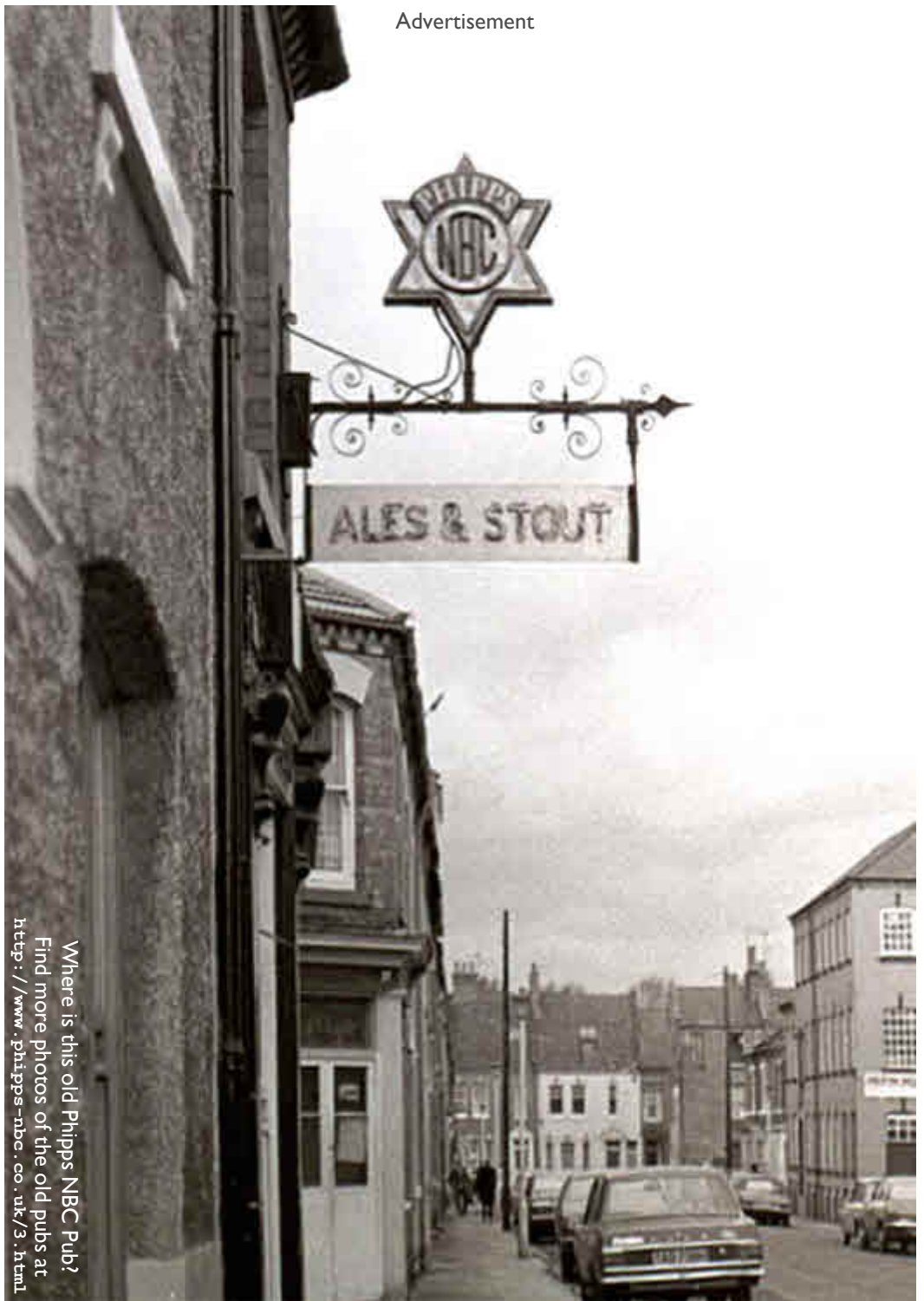
“Sorry, I can’t serve you”, says the barman.

“Why not” asks the golf club.

“Because you will be driving later”.

A grizzly bear walks into a pub and says “Can I have a pint of  
..... best bitter please?”

The barman says, “Sure, but why the big pause?”



Where is this old Phipps NBC Pub?  
Find more photos of the old pubs at  
<http://www.phipps-nbc.co.uk/3.html>

## Table Skittles — A Northamptonshire Pub Game Explained by Mark Shirley

Three **Cheeses**, nine **Skittles**, one **Deluxe Leather Armchair**. The mysterious Northamptonshire (& Leicestershire) sport\* of **Table Skittles** can take just a few seconds to learn, but a lifetime (or more) to master. The rules are archaic and obscure, and remain a closely guarded secret (from me at least). Here's what I've managed to glean from sources close to the inner sanctum of Skittling power, the elite players of the game, and the **Grande Fromage** of the **Red Lion, Middleton** team, **Monseur 'Kingpin' McQueenie**.



The traditional '**Stricken Buzzard**' skittle formation of the Northampton game

**The Throw** — Anything goes really, and I mean anything! A throw in the general direction of the table is considered the gentlemanly and correct way. Throwing at the poor unfortunates in the **Woodyard** (see below) is frowned upon, unless they've fallen asleep, in which case it's to be encouraged. Throwing at the **Chalker** is well-out of order, a firm poke in the ribs is usually enough to keep them awake.

So, **Skimming, Hurling, Lobbing, Rolling, Over-arm, Under-arm, Through-the-legs**, all are acceptable, just so long as a full pint held in the non-throwing hand can remain upright, and without spillage during the throw. Oh! and

no excessive polishing of the Cheeses at the Oche, this isn't Cricket!

**Drink & Fag Breaks** — Taken frequently, and usually (though not always) in the same pub/club where the match is being played. Too much drink can of course affect ones throw, as indeed can too little! Since everything is geared towards the most important part of the night, the **Beer Leg** (see below), it's crucial that a player has just the right amount of alcohol and nicotine swilling around their bodies when it come to the money shots at the end of the night. This is the essence of the traditional game, drinking and smoking is Skittles. Throwing a few Cheeses at the Skittles Table merely represents a welcome break from the frantic business of the bar and smoking shelter.

**Barracking** — To be encouraged. Sometimes ribald, usually of a personal nature, always directed at your own team mates. Can be used as an aid to concentration. There really is nothing more off-putting than a hushed silence! A separate Cup is usually awarded at the end of the season for the most 'fruity' and sustained barracking. A women's team usually wins this.

**The Woodyard** — Neither a Yard, nor strictly speaking a Small Forest. The Woodyard is the grown-up equivalent of a Sand Pit. A place where men and women can go to play with blocks of highly polished wood without fear of ridicule. Handling the Skittles during a match helps the Woodyarders maintain motor skills, can aid the development of good hand-to-eye coordination, and stimulates the mind through play and interaction with the pretty wooden pins. Everyone loves to play in the Woodyard.

*(continued overleaf...)*



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Food is served Tuesday to Saturday from 6.00 to 9.00pm and Sunday from noon to 6.30pm

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(...continued from previous page)

**The Beer Leg** — A corruption of the old Dutch/Spanish term **Boer Légar** (meaning: 'to hand-down a young Farmer for gain'), this is the most important part of the night, and usually the least fun for all concerned. Banter drops away, concentration is at an absolute peak, there's big money at stake now. As much as £1.50 can be won or lost at this stage of the game, and the tension in grown men's wallets can make or break a throw. The gloves are off now, sometimes even cardigans and jumpers come off too, it's a case of who blinks first, and the winner takes, quite literally, all. How's it played? I don't know! I throw with my eyes shut at this stage of the game...

**Scoring** — Your guess is as good as mine. Nobody knows how the scoring works. A

player **Sets**, he/she **Throws**, someone wins, someone loses. That's it really. Answers on a postcard.

\*The league tables appear in the Market Harborough Mail in the **Sport** section, alongside Dominos and Cribbage. That's good enough for me!

Mark Shirley

### **Confused?**

An explanation of the scoring can be found at the website of the Byfield skittles league:

<http://www.byfield-skittles.co.uk/>

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# CAMRA National News

News — Press Releases — Campaigns

FORTY years ago a young journalist and three friends set out on a mission to improve their nation's beer.

To celebrate this special anniversary, *What's Brewing?* talked to founder Graham Lees about how CAMRA was set up following a pub crawl in Chester and how he was joined by fellow members recently to recreate this historic moment in the organisation's history.

As a young Chester Chronicle journalist Graham Lees got some of his best stories while having a pint in one of the city's many historic pubs.

A lifelong fan of decent ale, his growing disappointment at the beer served to him during his time as a junior reporter led him to become the driving force behind a new organisation which has led a 40 year campaign to revive the greatest of British brews.

With the help of three friends, Graham founded CAMRA, the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale, now known to its 120,000 members as the Campaign for Real Ale, often described as one of the most successful consumer groups in Europe.

To celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Graham joined fellow CAMRA members to retrace the Chester pub crawl where the idea to improve British ale was first discussed.

In March 1971, Graham's drinking pals, fellow journalists, Bill Mellor and Michael Hardman, and brewery worker, Jim Makin,

met Graham in Chester the night before they left for a boozy break to Ireland.

During a pub crawl around Chester to mark the start of their holiday, the friends came back to their usual lament of the lack of good quality and varied beers coming out of the pumps.

Graham, 63, who now lives in Bangkok where he is an editor for the Associated Press, said: "There was a monopoly on beer at that time in Chester by the brewery Greenall Whitley who were based in Warrington and owned many of the pubs in the city.

"So there was not a lot of choice at all and the beer really wasn't that great either."

(continued overleaf...)



Photo: © CAMRA

(...continued from previous page)

During their trip to the Emerald Isle the following day, things didn't improve with little else being on offer but Guinness and other stouts.

Returning to Chester, it was Graham who seriously mooted the idea that something should be done to improve beer in Britain and his friends vowed to join his fight.

Graham said: "I always say CAMRA may have been conceived in Ireland but its gestational period was definitely in Chester. It was where we seriously decided that something must be done."

That something has now turned into one of the most successful consumer organisations in Europe which campaigns diligently for real ale, real pubs and consumer rights.

With more than 120,000 members, the organisation is made up of 200 branch committees all over the UK, many of which run their own beer festivals, publish local newsletters and run social events. It is governed by a voluntary, unpaid, national executive, elected by the membership.

Graham said: "We didn't have a clue what to do at first when we decided we should do something more serious. People kept saying to us well you are talking about how things need to change but what are you actually doing about it?"

"The only model we had for the organisational structure was the National Union of Journalists which I was active in at the time so we used the idea of having branches and area organisers and that really formed the backbone of CAMRA."

In 1972, Graham moved to the south east to work on an evening paper, leaving the Cheshire region of the organisation in the

safe hands of his friends Laurie Hughes and Carl Butler.

His move down south is the reason why CAMRA's headquarters are now in St. Albans, Hertfordshire.

Graham believes his biggest success with the organisation is getting it off the ground in the first place.

He said: "We were doing it all part time at first while we were working. We just wanted to save traditional cask beer from extinction and not just save it but invigorate it too."

With more than 800 small and micro breweries now supplying all over the UK, it would seem CAMRA'S original aim has been realised and while it is hard to source real ale in Bangkok, Graham is very partial to

# Hoggleys Brewery

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01604 - 831762

email: [hoggleys@hotmail.com](mailto:hoggleys@hotmail.com)

[www.hoggleys.co.uk](http://www.hoggleys.co.uk)

trying as many as he can when he comes back to the UK to visit friends.

Graham said: *"It is very difficult to name a favourite beer because there are just so many to choose from now which is great. I do like a dry hoppy beer or a stout in the winter."*

There was ample beer for him to try when he took part in the Founder's Crawl to celebrate the 40th birthday of CAMRA which took in 12 of the city's hostelries and ended in one of Chester's newest real ale pubs, The Brewery Tap in Lower Bridge Street.

The Brewery Tap, which is the first pub to belong to the Chester brewery, Spitting Feathers, opened its doors in November 2008 in one of the most historic buildings in Chester. Dating back to the 1600s, the bar is housed in is an old Jacobean banqueting

hall complete with an enormous sandstone fireplace.

For more information about **The Brewery Tap** pub in Chester see their website: <http://www.the-tap.co.uk>

Not a member of CAMRA yet?  
Find the membership form overleaf →



Photo: sally\_monster (flickr) BY-NC-ND

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## Branch Social Trips

The two Beer Festival bus trips below are on the green vintage Bristol bus.

### Northamptonshire Beer Festival Bus Trip

- Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May
- Starts from Desborough at 17:30, and runs via Kettering and Wellingborough to Northampton.
- Please book with the Social Secretary (places limited)

### Welland Valley Beer Festival Bus Trip

- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June
- Starts from the Malt Shovel Tavern, Northampton at 18:00, and runs via Wellingborough and Kettering.
- Visiting 5 or 6 of the 10 pubs taking part, including new entrants the Fox, Wilbarston and the Neville Arms, Medbourne.
- Please book with the Social Secretary (donation requested)

## Hook Norton Brewery Trip

- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July
- Starts from the Malt Shovel Tavern, Northampton at 09:00
- Cost £20, please book with £10 deposit by 15th May to Social Secretary.

Contact the Social Secretary, Karl Tecklenberg by e-mail: [social@northantscamra.org.uk](mailto:social@northantscamra.org.uk)



A previous trip on the green bus

It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale

Save money by paying by Direct Debit!

# Join CAMRA today...

Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free 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](http://www.camra.org.uk) or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.



## Your Details

Title ..... Surname .....

Forename(s) .....

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Email address .....

Tel No (s) .....

## Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title ..... Surname .....

Forename(s) .....

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....

Please state which CAMRA newsletter you found this form in? **Over The Barrel** — Northants branch

Direct Debit      Non DD

Single Membership      £20       £22   
(UK & EU)

Joint Membership      £25       £27   
(Partner at the same address)

For 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



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



Please fill in the form 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

To the Manager      Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder (s)

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Reference Number

### Originator's Identification Number

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- If the amount to be paid or the payment dates change CAMRA will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

detached and retained this section

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of accounts.

# Local Beer Festival Roundup

as submitted at <http://www.northantspubguide.org.uk>



## Long Buckby Rugby Football Club 2nd Beer Festival

*Fri 10<sup>th</sup> — Sun 12<sup>th</sup> June*

- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June between 18:00 till 23:00
- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> from midday till 23:00 and
- Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> from midday till 16:00 (*or when the beer runs out !*)

All profits are towards the Club's development Fund. 15 Beers, 10 minutes' walk from Long Buckby station. For more info please see <http://www.lbrfc.com>

## Talbot, Oundle 2<sup>nd</sup> Ale Festival

*Fri 24<sup>th</sup> — Sun 26<sup>th</sup> June*

- Over 20 different ales from local breweries and regional micro breweries.

## George & Dragon, Chacombe Beer Festival

*Sat 9<sup>th</sup> — Sun 10<sup>th</sup> July*

20 real ales and ciders

### Saturday:

Gates open at noon

- £6 entry — £1 of which goes to the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance
- Live music from 5-11 pm *Leatherat* headline plus two more bands tbc
- Pig roast & BBQ
- Face painting

### Sunday:

- Gates open at noon — free entry
- Live music on the patio from 2 pm — *The Screaming Abdabs*
- BBQ and Trade stalls

## Wig & Pen, Northampton Cider & Perry Festival

*Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> — Sun 17<sup>th</sup> July*

- 60 ciders and perries
- details to follow

## Brackley Round Table Beer Festival

*Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July, Brackley Town Hall*

- 40 beers including 2 Czech lagers
- Food available
- Live bands

## Raunds Town Cricket Club Beer Festival

11<sup>th</sup> — 14<sup>th</sup> August

- Details to be confirmed



## The Bull's Head, Arthingworth

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> — Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August

- Over 20 Real Ales
- Real Cider
- Live Music
- En-suite accommodation available
- See the Bull's Head Online: <http://www.thebullsheadonline.co.uk>

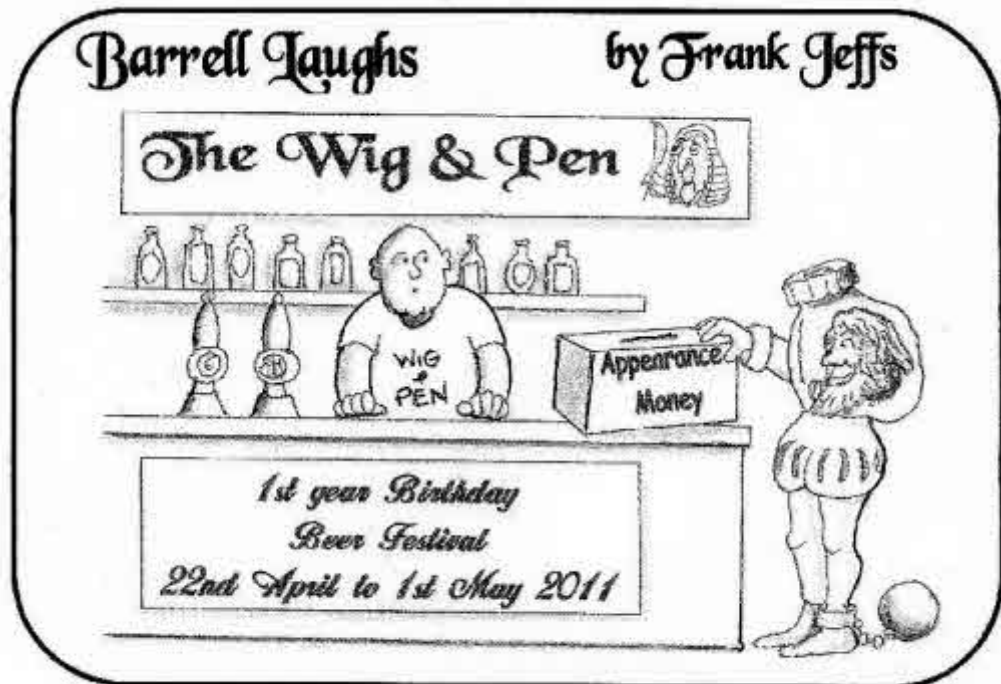
## Great Doddington Club

Thurs 27<sup>th</sup> — Sat 29<sup>th</sup> October

- More details nearer the time
- 20-25 Beers, Ciders, Perries
- Live entertainment
- More details nearer the time

Entries for this section **MUST** be submitted online at  
<http://www.northantspubguide.org.uk>

Entries which are submitted by e-mail, text message, etc. will not be included



[www.frankcartoonsnorthampton.co.uk](http://www.frankcartoonsnorthampton.co.uk)

# Wootton Working Mens Club



**Wootton Working Mens Club**, formerly “The Old Red Lion”  
Church Hill, Wootton, Northampton. Tel: 01604 761863

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Games Room has Northamptonshire skittles, pool table and darts

Other activities within the Club include Bowls, Fishing, Golf and Road Runners

**WHY NOT COME TO THE  
CLUB THAT THINKS IT'S A PUB?**

## Women brewers launch Project Venus.



Project Venus was conceived by Grantham brewer, Sara Barton from Brewster's Brewery (SIBA). Sara had come across The Pink Boots Society, a US group promoting women in brewing, and so decided to start a group called Project Venus in the UK. A call to arms was made to all female brewers (brewsters) to collaborate on a brew, to show off female brewing at its best.

Sara was joined by six other brewsters from across the UK and Ireland: Sue Hayward from The Waen Brewery (SIBA) in Montgomeryshire, Grainne Walsh from Metalman brewery in Waterford in Ireland, Sara Carter from Triple FFF brewery (SIBA) in Hampshire, Michelle Kelsall from Offbeat brewery (SIBA) in Cheshire, Jennifer Nichols at Northcote brewery and Kathy Britton, new owner of Oldershaws (SIBA) in Grantham.

The team decided on a series of brews using roughly the same recipe but with local variations and the recipe was put together with input from all concerned (communicating via Facebook).

The first beer, Venus Jade, was launched in a packed, specialist ale bar, The Rake in Borough Market London on Monday. Venus Jade is a light amber beer; 4% ABV and features the Citra and Pacific Jade hop from which it takes its name.

The appeal of the beer was apparent with two firkins being polished off in two hours! As the well known beer blogger, Marverine Cole commented: "Quite simply a terrific beer designed for all to drink but brewed exclusively by women".

Sara Barton said: "It is wonderful to launch our beer so successfully, women are making big strides in this industry and this is just one more sign of that"

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*(See Monthly Guide)*

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[www.wig&pennorthampton.co.uk](http://www.wig&pennorthampton.co.uk)

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