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THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**

ISSUE 87

WINTER 2019



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Editorial

Our cover picture for this edition features a pub on the very edge of our branch area, the Red Rover in West Wellow. The **Red Rover** was singled out for our front cover because on November 2nd it was awarded a national accolade as the nation's most dog-friendly pub.

These annual awards are run and sponsored by rover.com, the largest dog-sitting/walking organisation in the country. The finals were held at London's Hilton Hotel.

The Red Rover is a Greene King managed house (manager, Emma Dodge) on the busy A36 Southampton to Salisbury Road, just before the county boundary. Emma, a dog owner herself of course, was delighted with the award and explained that being so close to the New Forest it seemed obvious to welcome in the hosts of dog walkers it attracts. There is a special section in the menu for the four-legged customers, including such delights as rump steak and roast chicken, some festive Christmas attractions are in plan.

After ten years in the post, the chief executive of the British Beer and Pubs Association (BBPA), Brigid Simmonds, has decided to move on to new pastures. As a perpetual optimist, despite the past decade of falling pub numbers, she leaves with plenty of reasons for satisfaction.

In 2009 the BBPA was embroiled in political turmoil – the four preceding years had seen a 42% increase in beer duties (despite being already almost the highest in Europe), business rates were unfairly penalising pubs and on top of all this public sentiment was distinctly moving

permanently to a lower drinking culture. But, despite George Osbourne's arch-expenditure-cutting nature she helped to change the political climate so that starting in 2012, subsequent budgets included a string of duty cuts and freezes. Of course, there is still lots to do – the relentless closure of pubs goes on, even though the rate is now modest. Throughout, Brigid has been a realist – fighting for every pub was often strategically unproductive, yielding some ground to defend strongholds was often the correct strategy.

Taking over from Brigid will be a real politician, ex-MEP Emma McClarkin. Elected for the East Midlands in 2009 as the European Parliament's youngest Member.

And now, a timely reminder: The **2020 Winchester Beer Festival**, our next festival, will be on Friday and Saturday, 13/14 of March. For details/tickets visit our website nearer the date.



Seeing the state of daily life in Hong Kong one can sympathise with anyone there feeling an urgent need to go down to the pub! But, even if you are the city's richest man (91 years old Li Ka-Shing, owner of CK Asset Holdings) and can easily splash out a mere £4.6 billion in cash and debt servicing for the entire Greene King empire (controlling almost 3000 pubs, hotels and restaurants), we look on with trepidation at the impact the sale may have on our familiar locals.

Greene King shareholders approved the deal almost unanimously in mid-October and, although many reassuring statements have been issued both from Bury St Edmunds and from Hong Kong, all promising a continuation of 'present policies,' there must be fears that a vast property company based several continents away will have some less concern for views from the village's public bar than would a boardroom in central Suffolk...

One particular concern, voiced by SIBA's chief executive James Calder, is that no extra obstacles are raised to the supply of non-Greene King beers from members of that Association. A second, immediate, fear must be for the present beer range, especially the XX dark mild – just a tiny percentage of total brewery output – a clear target for any 'new broom.' Even on the central range, a dozen or more beers in the 3.9-4.5% abv range, badged to five or more breweries might seem a trifle extravagant to a rationaliser.

The usual free market mantra maintains that take-overs are unpreventable, a force of nature, but perhaps not everywhere. To

quote CAMRA's well-known beer writer, Roger Protz: *"The French would never allow their leading Champagne or Bordeaux producers to be taken over by foreign companies. Neither would the Germans part with their cherished breweries to property developers."*

Stimulated by the huge take-over bid the Unite union, which represents many of the workers at the Bury St Edmunds headquarters, are to ballot members on strike action over what they describe as a 'paltry' offer of an annual pay rise of 2%; (the ballot result should be known by this edition's publication date).

To underline these fears, the BBPA (British Beer and Pubs Association) has just released figures for this year that continue to show that, overall, beer sales are still in decline. For the second quarter of the year, from 2018 to 2019, overall beer sales declined by 2.2%. This was made up from a drop of 2.8% in over-the-bar sales in pubs and 1.7% in off-licence and supermarket sales.

Although still a decline, the figures do seem to be gracefully bottoming out in line with the falling number of pubs (ten years ago more than 50 pubs were closing every week, but this figure is now down to just some 10 to 15).

A provision in the Companies Act of 2006 is that any expenditure 'intended to influence voters' must get the specific approval of a company's shareholders. Tim Martin. The flamboyant founder and 32% owner of the Wetherspoon empire spent almost £95,000 on beer mats, posters and leaflets

supporting the Brexit leave campaign. The other 68% of public and institutional shareholders were not given any say. With many beer mats, for example, saying 'vote leave' it looks like a slam-dunk 'Guilty m'Lud.'

In his inimical style, Mr Martin has hit back robustly, classing the £95K as 'a relatively small sum' in comparison to the 'huge amounts spent by big business' supporting 'remain,' and to bring it up now, three years after the referendum is 'pathetic.'

As if the contortions of Brexit haven't given Northern Ireland enough to talk about, mid-October saw the opening of a public consultation period on the province's antiquated and restrictive licensing laws. As examples of the strange prohibitions there, a brewery cannot open a taproom, cannot sell online and cannot even run a brewery tour! The consultation will be open until early December.

Finally, it seems that the famous, Bavarian Oktoberfest in Munich, that brings so much enjoyment to German beer drinkers, may be helping to destroy the planet!

Environmentalists have been measuring the quantities of methane released over the sixteen-day festival by the six million plus attendees drinking seven million litres of beer. Result: almost 1.5 tonnes! The scientists were at pains to not blame the drinkers too much, claiming that almost 90% was 'leakage' from cooking activities for the half million chickens and quarter million sausages consumed. Only some 150kilograms were attributed to burps and the inevitable flatulence...

The Southern Hampshire Branch of CAMRA has some seventeen hundred members and is run by an elected committee. Some of their specific responsibilities are listed here (at this year's AGM in mid-May so some positions were not filled, as shown. Please contact the Chairman in these cases.) Please feel free to contact anyone with queries or information.

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There is also now a **Facebook Group** for the branch, open to both members and non-members. To join look on Facebook at:
shantscamra

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BORN and BREWED



Southampton: Bedford Place/ London Road

There is a new outlet in what was, until it stopped trading in December, Martha's charity shop. The premises at 33 Bedford Place is now **Beards and Boards**. The Boards part of the name is a reference to the skateboard theme of the décor! Three real ales are on offer, alongside 10 keg beers. We hope there won't be too much confusion with two pubs in the same area, the other being Belgium and Blues, that can be shortened to B&B. The past few months have seen a lot of activity in the pub scene in the Bedford Place area of Southampton. What has most recently known as **4Q Bar and Lounge** but better known to many as the **Pensioners**, reopened in August as **Black Phoenix**. Two real ales are generally available. This is not to be confused with the proposed 'gentlemen's club' which is due to open in what was **Kelly's Bar**, and more recently **Kiss**, in London Road and which will be called **Black Diamond**.

A licensing application has been granted to reopen **Seymour's Wine Bar** as **Shenanigans**, '...an Irish bar showing sporting events with live music at weekends.'

Southampton: Above Bar

A little to the south, we hear that the **Spitfire** in Above Bar, which currently offers a range of real ales, will be converted into an 'O'Neills'. Pubs in the O'Neill's chain do generally serve real ales, so let's hope a good selection is on offer following the change. We mentioned in the last edition that **Sharkey's Sports Bar** was likely to open in Above Bar. The proposal put to planners was to create a venue over three floors, with a snooker room on the top floor. This and various other planning applications have been approved but the venue is yet to start trading at the time of writing.

We noted in the last edition that the future of **Firehouse**, in Vincents Walk, was under threat. We are pleased to report that at the time of writing it is still trading.

Southampton: Below Bar

The building that at one time hosted the **Ferryman and Firkin** and which had been closed for around 10 years, has reopened as Turkish restaurant **Ottoman Kitchen** in August. It has been nominated for 'Best Middle Eastern Restaurant in the UK' in the 2019 Asian restaurant Awards following a visit from anonymous judges.

Southampton: Oxford Street

During the summer plans were submitted to turn the former **Prezzo Italian Restaurant** in Oxford Street into a new venue with a restaurant on the first floor and a bar on the ground floor. The request was to open the restaurant from 4pm to 11.30pm each day, with the bar staying open until 2am. The plans were rejected, largely due to the late hours being sought.

Southampton: Bevois Valley



The **Hobbit** in Bevois Valley Road is under new management. Jack Andrews took over in September after Stella Roberts, who had run the pub for 12 years, decided to give up the

lease. Mr Andrews already runs the Black Phoenix (see above) and the nearby Shooting Star.

Southampton: Portswood

The **Crafty Fox** on the Broadway in Portswood is closed. At the time of closure it was said to be for remedial works, completion due 26th July 2019, but there has been no sign of any works.

Southampton: Bassett

The **Stile** in University Road has been put out of its misery. It has been demolished, which means that all three former pubs in the area, the others being the **Gate** and the **Crown and Sceptre**, are now gone. The planning documents state that, *“Following demolition, the site would be landscaped to provide an improved entrance to the University campus.”*

There could be better news on the horizon for Bassett drinkers. Readers may recall that two years ago we reported a planning application for 228a Burgess Road to be converted from a shop to a drinking establishment. Permission was granted but there has been little sign of any progress since. Now however we see that an application has been submitted to allow the sale of alcohol and playing of music at the premises, to be known as **BAR SO16**.

Southampton: Bitterne

Bar Marina at Kemps Quay has been renamed **Paddle & Peel** and reopened on 6th July. New landlord is Andy said there will be 3 cask beers, 2 KeyKegs along with cans & bottles. A wood fired pizza oven will provide a food offering.

Southampton: Shirley

Bon Sante, a café, has taken over from what was **Café Reflections** in Shirley High Street.

Nearby, the former **Crown**, which was hit by a

fire in November 2018, is still boarded up but a notice on the fencing protecting the building says that the Paddy Power bookmakers will be reopening at some point.

On the other side of the High Street the **Salisbury Arms** suffered damage when most of the pub's windows were smashed. Fortunately, the pub was able to continue trading while waiting for repairs, which have now been completed.

Southampton: Coxford

The former **Bridge Tavern** suffered a fire in September. Although there was internal damage, the external structure remains substantially intact. The pub has been closed since 2007. In 2010 an application was submitted to build two blocks of flats on the site but the plans were rejected as being out of character with the neighbourhood.

Nursling

After an 18-month closure, the **Four Horseshoes** in Nursling reopened in July following major refurbishment. Although there is an emphasis in the food side, there is also a bar area with three handpumps.

North Baddesley

A little further north, a £160,000 refurbishment took place at the **Bedes Lea**. As well as a new look there are also new licensees in Tammy Moon and Phil Sayers. A new menu has been introduced and breakfasts were available at weekends during the Rugby World Cup.

West Wellow

As the *Editorial* describes and our cover picture illustrates the **Red Rover** has been presented with a national award as the country's most dog-friendly pub for 2019. We pass-on our congratulations.

Romsey



The **White Horse Hotel** made headlines during the summer as one of the assets listed in a money laundering trial. Local resident Jonathan Nuttall was one of a group of businessmen who were found guilty of international money laundering involving many millions of pounds. The White Horse was one of eleven properties handed over to the National Crime Agency (NCA). Effectively in seizure, it ceased trading on the last day of September. Happily under new ownership (Romsey Hospitality Ltd.) it reopened on the first of November.

We mentioned last time that the **Abbey Hotel** was still closed. In 2015 it was reported that it would reopen under the same management as the White Horse but this of course never happened. The Abbey Hotel was not connected with the court case. At the time of writing the freehold is on offer with a guide price of £1.6m.

There has been a change of hands at the **Old House at Home**. Anita Charman and her husband Rob Gentles previously ran another Fuller's pub, the Golden Lion in Fareham, and took over at the thatched pub in Love Lane in early Autumn. One aim is to introduce more locally brewed beers and Romsey Gold has already appeared on the handpumps.

While we have seen a lot of pub closures we have also seen a significant number of new outlets created. Most of these have been in former shops in built-up areas. There were prospects for a new pub in the Abbotswood development on the north-eastern outskirts of Romsey. Although space was set aside for a pub, the site is currently empty. It is now possible that retirement flats will be built on the site.

Ampfield



White Horse Ampfield

The closure of the White Horse Hotel in Romsey has led to some extra work for the staff of the nearby **White Horse** pub in Ampfield. The pub has been receiving around six calls a day from customers either worried that the Ampfield pub has closed or thinking that they are ringing the new number for the Romsey hotel.

Timsbury

The **Malthouse** at Timsbury reopened as the **Goat** in July following a £400,000 refurbishment which included re-cladding and re-plastering walls and rewiring in addition to changes to the garden and kitchen.

Braishfield

The new management of the **Dog and Crook** in Braishfield also run the Filly Inn at Setley (see below). Previous hosts, Mim, Al and Paul left at the beginning of September.

Whitsbury

From the Test Valley to the Avon Valley. The **Cartwheel** at Whitsbury reopened in spring after being closed for 11 months. Three handpumps serve two changing ales from local breweries and one cider.

Breamore

Permission has been granted for illuminated and non-illuminated signage for the **Bat and Ball** in Breamore.

Fordingbridge

A retrospective planning application was successfully submitted for the use of part of the car park of the **Crown Inn**, Fordingbridge as a decking and seating area. It can only be used for dining by pub customers during daylight hours.

Work is well underway on what was the **Augustus John** in Ashford, just outside the centre of Fordingbridge. It is due to reopen under its original name, the **Railway Hotel** in the autumn and when it does will provide seven en-suite rooms. The work is being overseen by Hampshire businessman Brian Currie, who was previously responsible for the restoration of the Regal Cinema in Fordingbridge. At the time of writing staff are being recruited for the reopening.

Ringwood

We previously mentioned that Phil Hoyle and Sarah Williams took over the **London Tavern** at Poulner last year. The move turned out to be a success as earlier this year they were recognised at Ei Group's 'Awards for Excellence.'

A planning application for the **Elm Tree**, was submitted by owners Greene King for various external work including a pergola and extended patios but was subsequently

withdrawn.

Avon

The **New Queen** at Avon reopened during the summer. The leasehold has been purchased by the Link Pub Co Ltd, which has run pubs and restaurants in Dorset and Somerset. The reopening followed an extensive refurbishment. On opening, the four handpumps included offerings from Dorset Brewing Company and Hop Back.

Bransgore

What was previously the **East Close Hotel** became **The Retreat** in June. The website refers enigmatically to, 'A hub of holistic and whole-person wellbeing.'

New Milton

An application was submitted in April which sought to allow the consumption of food and drink on the roof terrace of the **Central Bar** in Station Road, New Milton between 11am and 9pm each day. Permission was granted subject to a number of conditions including sound levels and the number of people allowed on the terrace at any one time.

A planning application has been submitted for various illuminated and non-illuminated signage at the **Walker Arms** (previously Rydal Arms.)

Milford on Sea

The **White Horse** in **Milford on Sea** was put up for sale, with a guide price for the freehold starting at £390,000. It appears to have been sold prior to being set for auction in September. As previously reported, an application had been submitted to build four houses on land behind the pub. This was rejected by New Forest District planners. Subsequently a revised application to build three houses has been submitted.

The **Red Lion** in the High Street has changed its name to the **Lazy Lion**. It was part of a makeover for the pub, which includes a new colour scheme and changes to the outside drinking area. There is an emphasis on 'traditional pub meals alongside seasonal specials'. The changes have been overseen by new licensee Ian Robertson, who was previously at the **Monkey House** in Lymington.

Lymington

Talking of the **Monkey House**, it is now being run by Will and Lizzie Bradshaw. The couple moved to the pub during the summer, having previously worked at the Brewhouse and Kitchen in Bristol. Will, who is originally from Burley, is looking at a gradual refurbishment and there are plans to open a small brewery on the site next year.

Long standing landlord of the **Thomas Tripp**, Jon Burdge, has decided not to renew the lease. Jon has been at the pub for 21 years and during that time has built a strong reputation for the pub with good food and drink and as a venue for live music. The future of the building is uncertain at present.

Nearby, what was previously the **Fusion Inn** reopened as the **Sail Inn** in June. Due to problems with previous incarnations, new licensee Peter Smith faced a number of objections to his plans for the pub, but these were eventually overcome. There is now a strong emphasis on food in the extensively refurbished pub, which has two handpumps on the bar.

An application for festoon lighting across the outdoor drinking area at the **Angel and Blue Pig** in the High Street was granted subject to the lighting being static and being turned off between midnight and 9am. A campaign has

been started to introduce safer crossing for pedestrians at the bottom of the High Street by the **King's Head**. It is estimated that around 10,000 people each day cross the road at that point during the height of the summer.

Sway

The saga of the **Silver Hind** in Sway seems to have reached a conclusion. In July planning inspectors upheld New Forest National Park Authority's decision to reject the demolition of the Silver Hind in order to replace it with housing.

Setley

The **Filly Inn** at Setley reopened in the spring. The three handpumps serve a range of local and national products. Note that contact details for the pub have altered. More information can be found on the website at www.thefillyinn.com

Brockenhurst

The **Forest Park Hotel**, on the edge of Brockenhurst, reopened in May following a multi-million pound refurbishment. The bar area has been restyled as '**The Inn at Forest Park**' and contains two handpumps selling local beers.

An application was made in May for an alcohol licence for 66-68 Brookley Road, to be known as **Commoners**. The application is for the provision of alcohol for consumption on or off the premises between the hours of 8am to 11pm each day. The closing time was conditional on obtaining permission from the National Park Authority to open beyond 10pm. Work looks to have started at the premises following the granting of an application for major changes, including reconstruction of the building for use as restaurant/cafe, drinking establishment and three flats.

Ashurst

The **Happy Cheese** at Ashurst now hosts a post office. It operates twice a week and follows the closure of the village's previous post office in January. Following the closure of Brockenhurst's post office, parish councillors suggested that pubs and other businesses might be able to step into the breach but we are not aware of any replacement having arisen.



Beaulieu



A substantial planning application relating to the **Montagu Arms** in Beaulieu was submitted during the summer. It included requests for additional guest accommodation, an extension to the Terrace restaurant and additional car parking spaces and bicycle racks. The application was granted subject to various conditions largely relating to ensuring any new building is in keeping with the existing structure.

Fawley

An application to build a single storey extension to the **Jolly Sailor** in Ashlett Creek, near Fawley has been rejected by National Park Authority planners. The refusal notice stated that the proposed addition, '...would appear out of scale and disproportionate in relation to the original building.'

Despite this setback, local couple Mark Cox and his partner Jo Sweeney have been continuing to improve the house, introducing new food menus, including afternoon teas, and ensuring that the ale offering always has two ever-changing guest beers.

The landlady of the pub made local headlines during the summer when her devotion to serving her customers ended in her having to be rescued by the RNLI and coastguards. After closing the pub one night, Jo and some friends had decided to spend some time on a yacht moored nearby. Unfortunately, the vessel became stuck on mud flats. The next morning, when Jo realised that the yacht would not re-float before opening time she decided to walk across the mud to the shore. Before reaching the shore, she became stuck and the rescue ensued!

At the **Falcon Hotel**, in the square, there is a new licensee, Jade Windsor, since October and she is overseeing a steady regime of redecoration and renewal – new beer lines and an additional handpump, renewed kitchen equipment will introduce an improved menu in the new year and B and B rooms are getting a makeover.

Totton

Work is underway on the creation of a micro-

pub in Totton. The premises at 31 Salisbury Road previously housed Noo-Thai, restaurant. It is to be called **6 Barrels** and will be selling craft ales lager, cider, wine, spirits, soft drinks and bar snacks. The license application included the provision of live and recorded music, and the sale of drinks between noon and midnight every day. The final decision restricted alcohol sales to 11.30pm which were the hours when the previous restaurant was trading. Co-owners Kevin Goodall and Sean O Donnell have said that they hope to support local micro-breweries.

The **Peg and Parrot**, Totton, changed hands during the summer and was also refurbished. As in the case above, many of the new breed of micro-pubs are located in former retail outlets. Arguably the Peg and Parrot was at the forefront of this trend as the premises was previously used as a draper's, and before that a greengrocer's. The facade still suggests its previous retail incarnations.

Netley

Plans for another new micro-pub, in Netley, were rejected by Hound Parish Council in June citing lack of parking, impact on local residents and deliveries causing traffic problems. The **Netley Tap Craft Ale Bar** would have been in the former Co-Op store in Victoria Road. Despite the vast majority of the 61 representations received supporting the new venue, Eastleigh Borough Council planners also subsequently refused permission.

Permission was granted for non-illuminated fascia signs and two externally illuminated free-standing signs for the **Dancing Goose** in Grange Road.

Butlock's Heath

A planning application has been submitted to

replace windows at the **Roll Call** in Butlock's Heath with new double glazing.

Swanmore

The **Hunters Inn** in Swanmore closed in June. Owners Heartstone Inns, who purchased the pub in March last year, blamed the closure on a lack of trade. Heartstone purchased the pub for £900,000 but offers are currently being sought in the order of £750,000 for the freehold.

Lower Upham

In the summer of 2018 permission was granted for the conversion of the **Woodman Inn**, Lower Upham to provide a four bedroom detached residential dwelling and the erection of three additional residential dwellings consisting of one x 2 bed house and two x 3 bed houses. Now a follow submission up has requested that various conditions, largely relating to the construction stage of the conversion, be removed.

Fair Oak

The **New Clock Inn** in Fair Oak reopened in July following a six-figure refurbishment. There is a change to bar area and new screens for showing sports events.

Eastleigh

Moving to the centre of Eastleigh we see that the brewery space at **Steam Town Brew Co** has been hosting a wide range of events. In addition to the expected brewery tours and beer tastings it has also been the venue for such events as yoga and hosted a film during the town's film festival. The **Chalet** also hosted a film during the festival. In keeping with the bar's theme, the film shown was 'Eddie the Eagle'.

North of the town, the **Ham Farm** Harvester restaurant on Twyford Road is due to change

managers by mid-November, might cask beer be re-introduced?

Chandler's Ford

Work has started on the **Village Hotel** that is located next to Asda on Bournemouth Road. It will be part of a 30 strong national chain, the nearest of which are in Portsmouth and Farnborough.

Hiltonbury Farmhouse appears to be thriving. It reopened in 2017 following a major refurbishment and earlier this year it was named Hampshire County Winner in the 2019 National Pub and Bar Awards.

Otterbourne

Readers may recall that there was at one time a food-orientated pub, the **Captain Barnard**, located on the main road between Otterbourne and Shawford. After it closed in 2008 outline planning consent was granted for a care home in both 2012 and 2015. Now the plans have been resubmitted by Brendoncare for the construction of 62 Bed Care Home for the Elderly containing 40 single rooms and 11 double nursing units plus a villa of 4 double nursing units.

Easton



The **Chestnut Horse** in Easton is under new ownership. To celebrate the change of hands, a

launch event took place in September. Retrospective planning permission has been granted for alterations to the surface of the pub garden.

Alresford

When agents Fleurets recently advertised that the lease of the **Alresford Cricketers** was available they claimed it was on 'on the corner of the main A31 and Jacklyns Lane.' While this might appear to be the case from a cursory glance at a map, those who know the area will be aware that although the A31 passes close to the pub it is in a cutting many metres below the level of the Cricketers, with levitation the only means of getting directly from one to the other.

Kings Worthy

The refurbishment of the **Cart and Horses** at Kings Worthy that we mentioned in the last edition has been completed and the pub reopened in April. Unfortunately, the six figure changes hadn't been long completed before one of the large new signs for the pub became bent, presumably through contact with a vehicle.

Winchester



On the outskirts of Winchester, Debbie and Scott Lymbery took over the running of the **Golden Lion** in Alresford Road during the

summer. The Wadworth house is the couple's first venture into the licensed trade and they may refurbish areas of the pub while remaining open for trade.

The **Bishop on the Bridge** reopened in the summer following a major revamp.

Continuing along the High Street, planning permission has been granted for a covered pergola, artificial grass and a new external bar in the rear courtyard of **Alfie's**.

A request for additional hours for **Vodka Bar** in Upper Brook Street was withdrawn before being considered by the city council. The original request was to extend opening hours for three weeks each year for university freshers events.

The proposal for changes to the windows of the **Green Man** in Southgate Street was brought to the attention of the public by the *Hampshire Chronicle*. The pub currently sports a number of windows that are part frosted and etched. The reporter opined that these were the last surviving such windows on a city pub other than, those at the Counting House on the site of the former Winchester Brewery in Hyde Street and the adjacent Mucky Duck (White Swan). Perhaps readers know of other examples. The **Monks Brook** in Chandlers Ford still has windows that reflect its past, displaying 'Strong's Romsey Ales' and 'Railway Hotel', its original name. Many such windows have disappeared over the last 20 years or so. One reason is the change in ownership of pubs, which means that the current owners no longer replace such windows when they get broken. Another reason is that some potential customers are more likely to enter an unfamiliar pub if they can see what it looks like inside. There have been attempts to save such windows in situ in

the past but have largely been unsuccessful. Fortunately in this case it has been agreed that the etched windows will be reinstated in the new frames and that in the event of any accidental breakage during the process new windows will be etched to match the existing.

Planning permission has been granted for replacement signage at the **Roebuck** in Fulford.

We wish Mike Sinker a happy retirement after 46 year as licensee of the **Bakers Arms**. 76-year-old Mike decided not to renew the lease when it was offered by owners Ei Group. The pub is now part of the group's Craft Union chain.

News reached us that a former licensee from Winchester has passed away. Jock Christie worked with his in-laws at the **Crown and Anchor** opposite the Guildhall for a while before taking over another Marston's pub, the **King Alfred** in Hyde. Jock ran the pub, alongside his wife Eve, for almost 20 years before retiring in 1990. The pub was a regular entry in the *Good Beer Guide* and raised thousands of pounds for charity under Jock and Eve.

Bishopstoke & Ashurst

Also passing away during the summer, at the age of 93, was Tom Porter. Tom built up a chain of pubs of which included the **Happy Cheese** at Ashurst. Older readers will probably remember him best for establishing the **River Inn** at Bishopstoke in 1985. When it opened it was full of memorabilia, including a replica of the Crown Jewels. The pub is now a **Toby Carvery**. Tom was also known for creating the Burns & Porter quiz business with Sharon Burns. As well as producing quizzes for thousands of pubs across the country it also supplied questions for many TV shows.

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Rob The Fyer in his Van from 645pm

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2nd/4th Wednesday Nights each month at 8pm we have

Acoustic Dever Folk Music Night - join in or just enjoy!

Thursdays - 1630-1830 - Mobile Fishmonger on Beach

Fridays - Pop Up Curry Night - order by 5pm eat 1930

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The Cask Report 2019



A recent poll has shown that more than 75% of pub goers recognise the Cask Marque symbol at the door of many pubs. Much like CAMRA, this group has been involved in the battle to improve the quality of our pubs' cask beer. One of their actions is producing an annual *Cask*

Report; an invaluable document that appears every autumn, with the support of SIBA, CAMRA, virtually all of the major pubcos and the national breweries. The 36 page report, a 'must read' for every publican is available on line and is downloadable as a pdf from cask-marque.co.uk (look under 'news' and then 'cask matters.').

Early findings within the report show that the cask market as a whole is becoming more specialised – pubs trading as specifically 'cask ale houses' are out-performing their generalist neighbours and within the whole market, premium cask ales (those in the range of 4.2-7.5% abv, according to the BBPA) showed a year-on-year growth.

A feature brought out again in this report (as in others in previous years) is the essential importance of beer quality. A majority of cask ale drinkers say that they have experienced being served very disappointing pints but the disturbing statistic for licensees is that some 40% of these disappointed drinkers then continue to

avoid the pub and perhaps more importantly almost as many will then *tell their friends...*

Several pages in the report feature useful aspects of the Cask Marque organisation. One such describes their Cask Finder 'phone app, a piece of free software downloadable from them. With this app, a snap of a pump-clip will detail a beer's characteristics and those of its producing brewery. [Memo to brewers: Please, please ensure that for every new beer you brew, you pass on the 'Cyclops' coded description to Cask Marque well before it is distributed into trade].

The warm summer that 2019 produced gave rise to discussions on the correct serving temperature for cask ale – long established as in the range 11°-13° C. The report outlines a number of surveys, questioning drinkers on their attitudes to the warmth or coolness of the beer in their glass. There was a modest fraction (less than one fifth) looking to find a pint below 11°, but, chiefly in those pubs selling little cask anyway; the survey does not suggest that over-cooled ale would be a major market winner. The other end of the scale could be another matter, one degree above the recommended range - 14° - is the crucial break point, more than half of drinkers served beer at or above that considered it unpleasantly warm.

The range of beers on offer is given some consideration, with this year being the first time for several years that the average number has dropped slightly – possibly as an aspect of addressing the quality problem already mentioned. Otherwise, the facts listed – that dark beers sell a third more in the winter, higher gravities at the weekend

or the so-called ‘amber’ beers are two-thirds of all annual trade are pretty well-known.

Several pages towards the end of the report tackle the vexatious question of what the price for a cask ale pint should be. Compared to other bulk beer styles cask ales cost more to present perfectly to the customer – there is generally more lost to waste, there is considerable skilled labour in looking after it well and there is more capital involved in keeping good stock levels. Yet it normally is on offer at the bar for less than a premium lager and often much less than some of the trendy ‘craft’ kegs. A mystery of the trade?

The average 2019 price for a pint in the south of England is given as £3.74, second only to London at £3.99 (although local observation would suggest that Southampton, at least, is a lot nearer to the capital than these figures suggest).

The last few pages attempt to discover what aspects could make cask beer more attractive to various types of customer. Important for licensees since, as previous reports have emphasised, cask drinkers spend more per head, per annum (over £1000) in pubs than any others. Quite a bit of the finding is contradictory, for example: ‘serving cask cooler would sell more’ even though, as outlined above, the section on temperature does not fully support this.

The final thoughts are almost all centred on information – more and better needed from brewers; more, much more, use of social media and especially a modernisation of the language used about what many still see as a ‘brown and old-fashioned’ product.

Autumn is also associated with another long-established beer publishing event, for nearly half a century CAMRA has issued its annual *Good Beer Guide*.

This year’s, the forty-seventh edition, was published in mid-October. The 1060 page guide contains details of 4500 pubs throughout the Kingdom that have been voted for by thousands of CAMRA members as selling the best quality cask beer; additionally – and this is an enormous ‘unique selling point’ – it lists all of the 1850 breweries and their 7500 regular beers. Additional sections describe the many and various beer styles now available and what to expect when trying them.

To buy your copy, visit:
www.shop1.camra.org.uk



A Landlady's Tale... by Mary-Samantha Thornton-Smith

Once upon a time, back in July 2016, a couple of pints with my best friend Christine, turned into an evening of several pints - like they do!

At that time, I owned Magik Earth, Southampton's Hippy/Crystal/Witchy shop and all was good...

But my soul was tired.

"I feel it is time for a change Christine" I slurred between beers. *"What shall I do next?"*

"How about one of those mini-pub things?" was her reply.

More beer was consumed and, after the obligatory kebab on the way home, I set my next project to 'go go go!' (Only I didn't realise what I had done until the morning).

Sporting a massive hangover, I stumbled to my PC and noticed I had signed up for and PAID for my personal licence training!

Being a firm believer in TPTB (the powers that be), I came to terms with my career change and embraced it! My tarot cards were packed away and I set about this whole micro pub lark. (How hard could it be?)

I rocked up to the four-hour course and test, rather hung over (and I am sure the examiner took pity on me) because I passed it with flying colours. The planning application was another story, but I got there in just under a year.

So, just over two years down the line, here I am; the owner of **The Witch's Brew** and what a life changing roller coaster it has been!

I had no experience in running a cellar, so I read up on it, asked for advice and in the end, just did it my way because EVERYONE has a different opinion.

I've always enjoyed cask ale so I knew I would recognise a bad pint but that was just a fraction of the knowledge I needed.

My word! What was I thinking? I went from being 'Mother Earth' to a cask tapping warrior within a few weeks.

I had no idea what it would turn out like, but it has evolved into something amazing.

Sadly, I soon realised that it was and still is, a man's word. I'm not a feminist, you won't see me 'burning my bra' but with the fact that the male human has better upper body strength than the female, it was still a hard pill to swallow. You see, I've always been so capable, so self-sufficient and not one for teamwork. Finding I had to ask for help, was difficult. I'm not in the best of health as I have active Crohn's Disease which makes me exhausted a lot of the time.

My friends and customers pitch in to help me, and along with a massive amount of support from the breweries I use, I can honestly say, I can't see myself doing anything else.

Finally, I have found my vocation!

Mary x
The Witch's Brew.

P.S If you are reading this and thinking of opening a micro pub, prepare yourself for long hours, back ache, tired feet, a rubbish social life and, depending on how you good you are with a mallet, the smell of beer about you, constantly!

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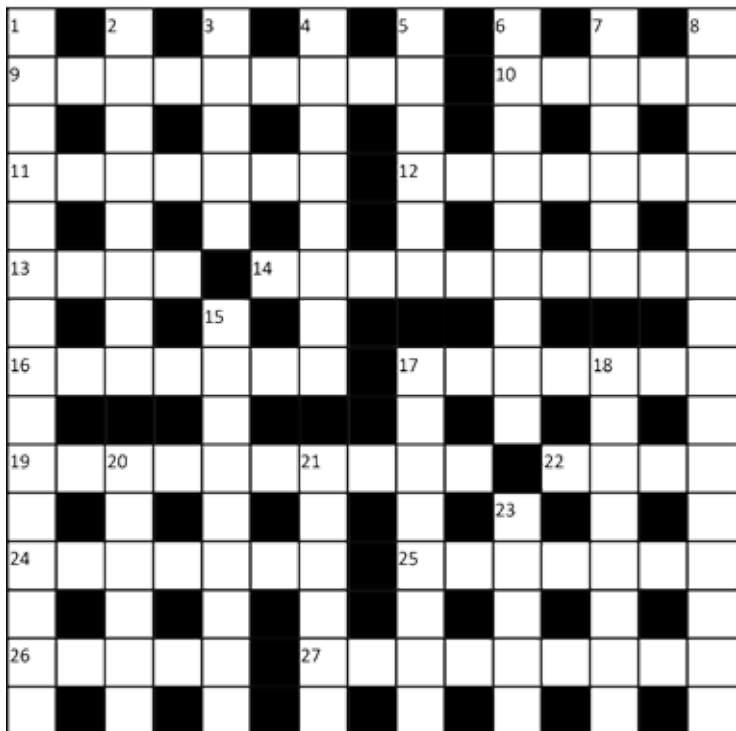
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Competition Crossword



QUETZALCOATL

Across

9. Xmas rose, heck of an introduction to York, see to the east (9)
10. Forbear meat even before Trump! (5)
11. Wholesome half of each tale by Lear (4)
12. The store is rented to a legless flyer (7)
13. Hunters gathering some ethics (4)
14. Communal cleansers rattle nude's composure (10)
16. Intros left little space for a breather (7)
17. Grendel slayer enmeshed in foul web (7)
19. Ironman's snacking raises tension? (4-6)
22. Endless blunder, obfuscating band (4)
24. Quarryman, skilled but noisy, curses a lot? (7)
25. Vintage member and in France an attractive woman (7)
26. Firstly, as my info goes, only he can be our pal (5)
27. Ligurian explosive show-off with limb and torso damage (9)

Down

1. Only, say, king, queen and a bishop on board, a novel layout? (5,3,2,1,4)
2. Schemers who let sport deliver (8)
3. 10X? Western resort (5)
4. Stallion's dream of protective clothes! (8)
5. Poulterer on a 'racketeer's' hillock in SW London? (6)
6. Romantic salon, or legal cockpit? (9)
7. Meatloaf's playing has let us all see (6)
8. Heroic enterprise – juggling to fit table in bar! (6,2,7)
15. Could the poor bat in invoke an assessment period? (9)
17. Riverside joker helps in releasing deposits (4,4)
18. First sea-level point on the Road to the Isles? (8)
20. The type that's inclined to emphasise (6)
21. Songster exposed through US silence (6)
23. Game of odd military clothing? (5)

Prizes to the first two correct entries drawn.

Closing date:
20th January 2020

To: The Editor
Hop Press
1 Surbiton Road
Eastleigh, Hants.
SO50 4HY
Or:
pat@shantscamra.org.uk

Issue 86 Solution



Or:



A good entry for this alphabetical edition, 27, although 4 unfortunately had single word errors. The errors were curiously paired – two misspelt KRAAL as KRALL and two others, very strangely, omitted the un-clued letters of VIRTU (V_R_U); is there a solvers' internet help group out there?

With alphabetic puzzles, using a symmetrical grid, there are two mirror imaged possible solutions – in this case imaged about the NW-SE diagonal. Both are shown here. I had put a clue to the orientation I used in composition (using UNIPLANAR to point the way) but, as the printing of both solutions here suggests, my hint went broadly unheeded! 17 entries were filled in the 'correct' way around but 10 as its mirror. However, being of a magnanimous mind I put them all in the hat for the draw.

As I have remarked before, one unavoidable consequence of alphabetic puzzles is that they always end up with a sprinkling of somewhat obscure words; a good sized dictionary is essential to both compiler and solver, the **Chambers 1998 edition** is my trusted source.

Winners, drawn from the hat, for this edition:

Rod Cross, Botley
and
Rebecca Pink, Romsey

The other twenty-one correct solvers were:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Ron Brading | Jocelyn Britcher |
| Kate Chessman | Nigel Cook |
| Philip Doughty | John Green |
| | (St Albans) |
| C. Grierson | Simon Gunther |
| Norman Hurl | Keith Jones |
| Len Larden | Guy Lawrenson |
| Gary Morse | Chris Neale |
| Mark Nichols | Tim Parkinson |
| (Rugby) | |
| Nigel Parsons | Jeff Philips |
| Harvey Saunders | Howard Sprenger |
| Dave Walbridge | |



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