



CAMRA

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Branch

Pub News

August 2009 – The Summer edition!

by Nigel Sadler - Pub Liaison Officer

I hope that many of you managed to visit the Summer Festival held in Admirals Park at the beginning of July. Once again it was a fantastic event and thanks to the organisation of Kevin Sutterby and his team, a great success. Even the weather was kinder to us this year with the rain holding off until late on Saturday. There will be plenty of pictures up on the website in the next few days for you to check out.

Beer of the Festival went to Sharp's of Cornwall for their excellent Special. Congratulations to Rees and all at Sharps for their achievement.

For those that are interested the other category winners were as follows:

Bitter	Sharp's Special
Stout/Porter/Old	Hopback Entire Stout
Mild	Brentwood Marvellous Maple Mild
Golden Ale	Green Jack Summer Dream (golden?)
Strong Ale	Brentwood Chocwork Orange
Cider/Perry	Joint Winners Felstar Elderflower Pook Hill Rum Reserve Gwatkin Yarlinton Mill Newton's Perry CJs

On the Tuesday of the festival, which is traditionally "trade" day, a presentation was made by Mike Woods, CAMRA Essex rep, to Tony and Barbara O'Doyle of the Wheatsheaf in Writtle for the title **CAMRA Essex Pub of the Year**.

Later in the week Franco of Felstar received his certificate for **Beer of the Winter Festival** for his "Backstabber". From memory a truly complex 10 percenter!

The planning and organisation of the 2010 festival will start in the coming weeks which shows just how much hard work goes into the event and it's all voluntary!

PUB NEWS

Another winner! Hot on the heels of Tony & Barbara at the Wheatsheaf, Writtle I am pleased to announce that Dave and Margret of the Woolpack in Mildmay Road have just been awarded **Best Cask Ale Pub in the East Anglia Region** by The Morning Advertiser! This means that they will now go forward to the national final with the winner being announced at the Awards Dinner at the London Hilton on 9th September. I am sure the whole branch will join me in wishing them the best of luck!

However on a more downbeat note no doubt many of you will have seen the Essex Chronicle article from 16th July detailing the closures and threats to the local pubs in our area

and featured The White Horse, Pleshey amongst others. It made sad reading. We hope that CAMRA's moves on the Pub Tie will help alleviate much of the hardship facing licensees but this may well take a long time to bear fruit.

We have already lost the Marsham Arms and now the Star & Garter in Moulsham Street is closing as I write this. In the meantime please get out and about and support your local pub and remember the branch now has a handy guide to a selection of the best in the area if you wish to venture further afield. (See also Local Pub Week below)

Moving on to forthcoming events:

The Square and Compasses, Fuller St – Victor and Susan are holding The Great British 'Fuller Street Beer and Jazz Festival from Friday 7th to Sunday 9th August with over 30 Real Ales and Ciders from around the Country along with food and entertainment as follows:

Friday 7th Open 11.30am to 11.00pm. Spit Roast 1pm to 3pm and 7pm to 9pm

Live Jazz from 7pm with The Ray Ward Trio

Saturday 8th Open 11.30am to 11.00pm. Spit Roast 1pm to 3pm and 7pm to 9pm

Live Jazz from 7pm with Jo Fooks and Ted Beament (from Humphrey Lyttleton's band)

Sunday 9th Open 12 noon to 6.00pm. Spit Roast 1pm to 3pm

Live Jazz from 1pm with The Kenney Baxter Band and Mick Foster

The Butcher's Arms, North End - Mark and Brenda have gone alternative and are holding a VEGGIE NIGHT Friday 7th August which I am sure will be a hit with many who enjoyed Leon's offerings at our festival.

For anybody that doesn't know John Powell, former landlord Brenda's husband was admitted to hospital last August, where he spent six months before passing away in February this year.

Brenda says "It has been a difficult time but thankfully we are now getting back into some sort of routine."

They will continue to hold Veggie Nights once a month on a Friday evening (dates to be advised) and plan to offer a three course meal at a set price.

Mark, Brenda's son, is chef and puts a lot of time and imagination into his vegetarian menus and generally offers three/four vegan choices as well as coeliac if requested in advance.

This first one in August they hope will be a little bit special as they have Chris Brimley singing folk between 8.00 - 9.00pm and from 9.30 - 10.30pm The Sheri Kershaw Band will also be performing. (Sheri was quite a big name on the music scene a few years ago, and she sings mainly folk/blues.) Call them on 01245 237481 to reserve a table

The Woolpack, Chelmsford – Dave and Maggie will be holding their late Summer Festival running from Thursday 3rd September to Saturday 5th. There will be 30+ ales and ciders on offer with Music on both the Friday and Saturday nights. Dave would also like to mention that as in the past CAMRA members can get their first pint at half price on production of their membership card. Further details of beers and ciders will be in the next newsletter but Dave wanted to get in early in this one.

The Horse & Groom, Galleywood – Gets a mention this month for having held its first real ale festival. Landlord Dave was pleased with the result and hopes to make this an annual

event. There were 15 ales on offer and it was a good selection, a BBQ and live music helped the first one get off the ground. The only thing missing was gorgeous barmaid Denise! ;-)

The Green Man, Howe Street – Sarah has lined up a soul weekend! Anyone remember Caister Soul Weekends all those years ago? Well if you do and you enjoyed it then here's what's on offer to help bring back those happy memories:

Sat 29th – Soul Band 'Corrine Band' playing from 1pm till 3pm and again from 7pm till 9pm There's a Fish B-B-Q and also there will be shell fish and salads on offer – From 1pm

Sun 30th – Same band playing same times. There will be the usual carvery on between 12-6pm £10.00 1 x course / £12.95 2 x courses.

Mon 31st – (BANK HOLIDAY) Same band, same times. Traditional BBQ on offer from 1pm with burgers, sausages, salads etc. Prices from £3.00.

St. Anne's Castle, Great Leighs – As always a great music line up from Pat for the month and beers on offer will include Black Sheep, Bombardier and Wherry. I would comment that the last event of the month on the 30th is very worthwhile as it's all in aid of Essex Air Ambulance.

- Sunday 2nd August **Prozac Yodel** - Bob Collum entertains from 5pm onwards, special guest is JJ Zarbo.
- Tuesday 4th August **Open Mic Night** - hosted by Jane White
- Thursday 6th August **Rock Jam Night** - hosted by John T & The Captain
- Sunday 9th August **Stars on Sunday Open Mic** - hosted by Steve FP & Kate
- Thursday 13th August **Entertainment Quiz** in aid of Essex Air Ambulance
- Sunday 16th August **Acoustic Soul** featuring Urban Reverb, Dave Stannard, Joan Simpson & many more!
- Thursday 20th August **C-A-S-Y-S** featuring Steve & Matt, Paul Steven Wood, Dave Stannard & Karly Wood.
- Friday 21st August **Maurices Rockin' Machine** - The best rock n roll Disco about.
- Friday 28th August **Lizzie B & Guests**
- Sunday August 30th **Charity Garden Party in aid of Essex Air Ambulance.**

There will be a football match at midday to kick things off (!) and then it's onto the day's entertainment which will feature 10 bands on the stage in the garden from 1pm. There will be beer tent with locally brewed beer from Felstar (Who? Only joking Franco!).

In addition to all this there will be various side attractions such as coconut shy, plate smashing, tug of war, bouncy castle etc. Then in the evening a Jam Session hosted by Full Mental Racket just to round the day off. Last year they raised over £3,000 for Essex Air Ambulance and with all your help they can equal that (or do better!!) this year.

Windmill Motor Inn, Chatham Green – Elaine and Peter have sent me a copy of "What's on at the Windmill", their own little newsletter and there's a big night in store for all those retro fans amongst you:

Friday 21st August – It's time to dig out those flares & smarten up the afro 'cos it's 70s night! There'll be food & drink from the "disco decade" and clothes from possibly the worst dressed years ever. With DJ Andy spinning the vinyl it promises to be fun. (What's vinyl Pete?)

Rose & Crown, Writtle – On the other side of town meanwhile Ellie has emailed to say that they have lined up some great events for the month and one again music features heavily:

Saturday 1st August - Live Music from In the Kiln a great new band playing lots of new stuff and a few oldies from likes of the Killers, Kings of Leon and some old classics.

6th August - There's Folk Group Meeting in the large function room above the pub.

August 22nd & 23rd - V-Festival Pre-party Music, outside bar, food served all day and Breakfasts being served from 9am. This will prove to be popular I am sure.

28th - 31st August - Beer & Wine Festival with live music Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There will be a wine expert on hand on the Saturday so why not pop long and have a chat bout plonk instead of beer for a change!. Food will be served all day and there are over 15 wines and 15 ale plus assorted ciders & perrys to choose from.

BREWERY BITS

Good to see Phil and Jeremy of Wibblers make the Essex Chronicle at the start of July with details of their plans for expansion. We wish them well in the venture and I am sure our friends of the Dengie branch will reap the benefits first! As mentioned last month their new "Mayflower" brew is certainly checking out.

Roger at Nethergate tells me that they are going to produce Mary's Ruby Mild as a permanent addition to their range following its success over the past few months. Good news for mild fans then and congratulations to brewer Tom for coming up with another great beer. In addition to this there will be a new ale for August, Drunken Monkey which is described as "a best bitter packed with flavour and burnt toffee and custard notes. German Pearle and English Bramling Cross hops provide a fantastic strong spicy finish". Well that has to be worth drinking!

Finally Brentwood Brewing Company would like it to be known that as of this time they intend to stick with brewing beer rather than branch out into the advertising world though of course "Heavenly Body" T-shirts and a calendar may well appear at a future date!

NEWS FROM HQ

A couple of things from St. Alban's this month that are worth noting. The first concerns beer duty and the second a plan to promote real ale to the 18-24 age bracket.

In the first CAMRA has announced it will be writing to MPs to urge them to support a groundbreaking new campaign to persuade the European Union to amend existing rules preventing the UK Government supporting pubs by introducing a lower rate of beer duty for draught beer sold in pubs.

John Grogan MP, Chairman of the influential Parliamentary Beer Group, is leading the campaign and has today tabled a Parliamentary Motion calling on the UK Government to

seek a change to European Union rules. A reduced rate of duty on beer sold in pubs would help alleviate the severe problems facing UK pubs.

The European Commission has indicated that it is willing to consider changes to current European Union rules and a review process is expected later this year.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive said:

'A lower rate of duty on draught beer sold in pubs would represent a golden opportunity for the Government to address the disparity between supermarket and pub prices, a problem directly associated with pub closures. This proposal would encourage a shift in alcohol consumption back to the regulated environment offered by well-run community pubs. This proposal would also stem the loss of community pubs and thereby reverse the decline of community life.'

Mike Benner continued:

'CAMRA first raised the need for a lower rate of duty in pubs in a submission to the Parliamentary Beer Group's Community Pub Inquiry back in 2006, and we are delighted that this novel idea has the full backing of the influential Parliamentary Beer Group.'

'An average pint of beer sold in the pub causes the consumer to swallow around 90 pence per pint in beer duty, VAT and employment tax revenue, and if community pubs are to survive, then the excessive tax burden they face must be reduced.'

Now to the second point of interest from HQ and young potential real ale drinkers.

CAMRA has also launched a competition in response to market research last year showing that less than a third of adult alcohol drinkers aged 18-24 years old have tried Britain's national drink, real ale.

At the Great British Beer Festival on Wednesday August 5th, CAMRA is teaming up with Alex Barlow, an internationally acclaimed beer writer and author of the best-selling interactive beer manual, 'All Beer Experience', to offer 20 young drinkers a place on an exclusive tasting tour at Earls Court.

Kim Carvey explained further the exclusive nature of the tour. She said:

'This tour promises to be a light-hearted and fun navigation through the world of beer, led by one of the most renowned experts in the industry. CAMRA invites any young adults to apply, whether they are curious beer novices or learned intermediates. They may even be completely averse to beer- we simply invite anyone seeking to experience new tastes and aromas to put their name forward.'

'As well as a chance to join the tour, all lucky winners will also receive free entry to the Festival, beer tokens, and a whole host of other Great British Beer Festival goodies!'

In addition to the tasting tour, Kent brewer Shepherd Neame will be looking to provide a more general beer education at the Great British Beer Festival with their 'From Nature to Glass' ingredients area. As well as demonstrating the natural ingredients which go into making up a glass of real ale, Festival-goers will be able to get up close to the hops and barley and find out more about why yeast and water are such key ingredients.

The exhibition is run by Shepherd Neame brewery centre staff and Festival-goers can meet the brewers at 6pm each day within the "Ingredients Area".

In the lead-up to the tour, Alex Barlow has recommended his top 20 beers for young drinkers to try at the Great British Beer Festival. These are:

Black Isle, Blonde 4.5% (Munlochy, Ross-shire)
Caingorm, Black Gold 4.4% (Aviemore, Highlands)
Hawkshead, Organic Oatmeal Stout 4.5% (Staveley, Cumbria)
Wold Top, Mars Magic 4.6% (Driffield, East Yorkshire)
Timothy Taylor, Landlord 4.3% (Keighley, West Yorkshire)
Moorhouse's, Black Cat 3.4% (Burnley, Lancashire)
Acorn, Old Moor Porter 4.4% (Barnsley, South Yorkshire)
Cains, Raisin Beer 5.0% (Liverpool, Merseyside)
Castle Rock, Harvest Pale 3.8% (Nottingham, Nottinghamshire)
Bateman, Salem Porter 4.7% (Wainfleet, Lincolnshire)
Purple Moose, Snowdonia 3.6% (Porthmadog, Gwynedd)
Purity, Mad Goose 4.2% (Great Alne, Warwickshire)
Breconshire, Cribyn 4.5% (Brecon, Powys)
Mauldons, Black Adder 5.3% (Sudbury, Suffolk)
Arbor, Beech Blond 4.9% (Stapleton, Bristol)
Red Squirrel, White Mountain IPA 5.4% (Hertford, Hertfordshire)
Fuller's, Vintage Ale 8.5% (Chiswick, Greater London)
Shepherd Neame, Spitfire 4.2% (Faversham, Kent)
Dark Star, Espresso 4.2% (Ansty, West Sussex)
Skinner's, Cornish Blonde Wheat 5.0% (Truro, Cornwall)

(Wot no Essex ales?!)

Now that's a list open to argument and discussion I am sure! What beers would you recommend (Responsibly of course!) for younger people to try? I think I can honestly say I only remember (being the operative word!) drinking 9 of the above. Anyone done the lot?

PUB REVIEW

This month we have a new contributor and therefore it's not just the solo waffle of yours truly! (I am sure many of you will breathe a sigh of relief.) So many thanks to branch member Claire Stafford-Cole for submitting the following review:

The Ship Public House, Stock Road, West Hanningfield CM2 8LB Tel: 01277 840201.

Initially a coaching inn dating back to 1530 The Ship got its name because the main structure was made from old ship timbers. This nautical theme is continued with a Captain's bell, telescope and various knots on the wall.

It has a restaurant area up four stairs and there are two interconnecting bars; one with sofas.

Although they stated that they serve freshly prepared food using local produce and suppliers we didn't see any evidence of things being local. However, it was a good family pub with a fenced and gated play area, with two slides, climbing frames, swings and plenty of outdoor seating with parasols. Apparently they have trampolines during the summer weekends. There were pretty, colourful hanging baskets and window boxes which made an attractive frontage on the main road.

We enjoyed the well kept real ales on offer namely Old Speckled Hen, Black Sheep Bitter and Adnam's Bitter. The guest beer when we visited was Greene King IPA.

Although the children's menu had homemade lasagne with garlic bread the other choices came with chips which would appeal to children but I would have liked to see healthier options. However seasonal vegetables were on offer as an extra side order for £2.50. The chicken nuggets are freshly prepared as would be the egg to go with the ham but I expect the scampi would be frozen (sorry I forgot to ask).

I had a very tender lamb shank on a bed of creamed potatoes with carrots, dwarf green beans and cauliflower which were cooked to perfection (£9.95) Richard and Derek had free range chicken stuffed with sausage meat and thyme wrapped in pancetta ham accompanied by sautéed new potatoes and carrots (£9.50) which was flavoursome with some crunch in carrots. Barbara's lasagne with salad, rosemary and garlic bread was very tasty and good value for money at £7.95.

All our meals were well presented with good sized portions but in the interests of doing this review we managed to squeeze in a dessert too which were all £4.25. Unfortunately Richard's strawberry and vanilla cheesecake lacked texture being more of a mousse on a biscuit base. Despite his disappointment the other puddings were delicious especially the summer berry Eton mess which included blackcurrants for a great tang and the Dutch apple flan which came with good quality vanilla ice cream.

Also on offer were lemon and raspberry tart with cream and a trio of ice cream.

There was not much available for vegetarians except the Ship's salad and a tagliatelle dish for the mains. A roasted red pepper and sweet potato soup served with crusty bread and butter for a starter (£4.95).

The fish choices consisted of cod or plaice in beer batter served with chips, seasonal salad or peas for £9.95; pan roasted cod on a bed of fine beans, potatoes, cherry tomatoes and onion stirfry with balsamic reduction (10.95); sweet chilli king prawn stir-fry with rice (8.95) and seafood tagliatelle including prawns mussels and red pepper accompanied by rosemary and garlic ciabatta for £9.95. Lincolnshire sausages were available with mash and onions with seasonal vegetables and gravy at £6.95.

Overall the food was excellent, well presented and good value for money. We gave it 7/10.

LOCAL CAMRA AWARDS – Food/Family

Just a quick reminder to say that the nominations and scoring for the Best Local Food Pub & Best Local Family Pub awards are running until the end of August so please keep your votes coming in. The awards will be finalised and announced at the September Branch Meeting. Presentations will take place at a later date.

LOCAL PUBS WEEK

CAMRA have a campaign to help promote the local pub called appropriately enough "Local Pubs Week". The idea is to encourage people to visit one or two pubs in their area and give a boost to trade and support a great British institution: the pub.

It is up to each branch to choose a week for this campaign and we will be looking to run ours in either the second or third week of September. (Actual date will be confirmed by end of August).

CAMRA produce pub packs of beers mats, posters and pump clip tops for licensees and these will be available from me. If you know a landlord/landlady who might be interested then please let me know. (Obviously all the pubs in the "Recommended Pubs Guide" are accounted for already).

Keep your eyes open for the next issue in September!

**For further news on pubs and breweries visit: www.tap-room.com
Please email me with any news/items for inclusion in future issues.
(nigsad@yahoo.co.uk)**