

# RuRAD In the Sticks

LEADMILL BREWERY and BOTTLE BROOK BREWERY

Producers of Traditional Hand Crafted Real Ales

Free Copy

#### In the Sticks

Welcome to the latest issue of "In the Sticks" the newsletter of RuRAD, Rural Real Ale Drinkers. We hope you enjoy reading it.

If you want to receive a copy electronically, e-mail snugdave@outlook.com.

For current & previous issues log on to www.dgmhall.me.uk/rurad. You can also find copies of the newsletter on the Loughborough CAMRA web-site (www.loughboroughcamra.co.uk/newsletters) along with digital copies of other local beercentric publications.



#### Beer & Pub News

It is reported that the **Puss In Boots**, Windley, re-opened on the 3rd December 2021. It was not clear what its future would be following the death of long-standing licensee Stewart Austin in 2020 so it's good to find that it hasn't been closed or turned into housing.

The Royal Oak in the Shambles, Chesterfield, closed since August 2021, is on the market (freehold) through the agents Fleurets for £295k. And as it turns out, they are also the agents for the Strutt Arms, Milford, the leasehold for which is for sale at £95k.

Sad to report that the **Crafty Crow** in Nottingham closed for good at the end of January. It was run by **Magpie** brewery but also sold many interesting guest beers and was very well run. For fans of **Magpie** beers, try the **Barrel Drop**, **Doctor's Orders** or the **Crafty Warehouse** bottle store and taproom at the brewery close by the Notts County football ground.

Some good news for a change - the White Lion in Swingate (Kimberley) has been sold to a pub company and will re-open in about one month's time. I had feared for its future as a

#### *MARCH 2022*

pub so I'm delighted and wish it every success. The Didler.

With pubs closing down all over the country it's nice to know that an area of Derby is going against the trend. In Mickleover there had always been 3 pubs - the Nags Head, the Vine and the Masons Arms. We now have 5 pubs with the opening of the Binary, a new bar/restaurant, the latest addition to the Bespoke Inns chain, which includes the Boot in Repton. Your correspondent went to try it and was impressed. 3 beers on hand pump from Dancing Duck, Boot and Sharps all in good condition. The Binary also has a selection of lagers. This is a new build pub, very modern and up-to-date and deserves to succeed but it is up against the Nags Head with 10 hand pumps (which should be in the GBG) the Hole In The Wall, which is in the GBG, the Vine, a typical village pub and the Masons Arms currently under restoration and will hopefully re-open soon. That's 5 pubs within 300 yards and a total of 28 hand pumps, well worth a visit, Don Pedro.

Sally, Jean & Steve welcome you to the



#### **Royal Oak**



55 Green Lane, Ockbrook Tel: 01332 662378

Country Pub of the Year 2011/12/13/15/16/17/20

Bass + 3 Constantly Changing Guest Ales Available

More good news (we're spoiling you): the Last Post micro-pub on Uttoxeter New Road, Derby which has been closed for 2 years is set to re-open in mid-March. Walter Scott who originally opened the pub in 2014 is taking over the reigns again with his friendly team. You can expect a warm welcome as you enter as you do at his other pub, the Queens Vaults in Ashbourne, with a range of beers from his own eponymous brewery on offer plus some quality guest ales & cider - you will be tempted to stay for a while I am sure. Expect a further update and/or report in a future RuRAD newsletter. Sooty.

Rebuilding and renovation work at the **Canal Inn**, Bullbridge, is now in full swing. This was bought by the **Hurt Arms**, Ambergate, in November 2021. It has its own Facebook page

and is being refurbished as a wedding venue

and is being returbished as a wedding venue (sister to the **Hurt Arms**). Projected opening date is September 2022.

I called in at the **Red Lion**, Fritchley recently. Opening hours are currently from about 3.30 pm on weekdays and 12 noon at weekends, closing most days at about 9.00 pm. Cask ale (usually **Full Mash**) is sometimes available but don't rely on it. The pub is not currently on the market but the owner is looking to sell. The Tramway Museum in Crich re-opens on 12th March and the **Red Lion** will be open whenever the museum is open. **Tram Inspector**.

Sad news reaches me that Roy Morris, late of the Shoulder of Mutton in Hallfieldgate, Shirland passed away on Saturday 22nd January after a long illness. The pub closed for good in 2020 when the 1st lockdown arrived. He'd been the landlord for the thick end of 30 years. Unique is the only way to describe him his catchphrase being "tenner for cash". His past employment was as a chef on North Sea oil rigs. Wingfield Wanderer.

According to a recent Facebook post, the new Titanic owned "bod Matlock" café bar opened on 21st February.

The **Black Bulls Head**, Openwoodgate has new opening hours: Mon-Thur, 3.00, Fri-Sun, 12.00.

Contributors: the Didler, Don Pedro, Snug Dave, Sooty, Tram Inspector, Wingfield Wanderer

April and the team welcome you to the

#### THORN TREE INN

21 Chesterfield Road, Belper Tel: 07974 470774

Winner of the Amber Valley CAMRA Winter Ale Trail 2019

Live Music --- Quiz Nights

Family and dog friendly

Real Ale, Real Cider, Real Fire Real Pub

#### Beer Festival News

Just a reminder that the CAMRA 45th Loughborough Beer Festival will take place at the Polish Club, Loughborough, from 3rd to 5th March. There will be around 60 different real ales available at this festival, including many from within a 30 mile radius of

Loughborough. This year, they also have a focus on Norfolk breweries. Breweries already confirmed are Barshams, Moon Gazer, Elmtree, Panther, Woodforde's and North Riding. Admission charge is very modest: Thurs Free, Fri/Sat £1 before 6.00 pm, £2 thereafter.

Readers will be very interested to learn that Steve & Katy Cresswell's DSOTR (Part 2) dark ale festival will be held from 31st March to 3rd April. The beers have already been sourced and include (just to whet your appetite) Tiny Rebel Voodoo People oatmeal stout (4.8%), Wilde Child Insatiable Circumstance Caramel Latte Porter (5.1%) and Eyam Bubonic Orange stout (6.0%).

#### BEEHIVE

151 Peasehill, Ripley Tel: 07510 431414

Selection of 4 real ales plus a wide range of ciders and perries, many sourced from the apple farms where they are made

#### **CAMRA Cider POTY 2022**

Darts, Dominoes & Skittles on weekly Quiz night Fridays plus card Bingo

Live music during the summer months plus regular vinyl nights featuring The Groover

Note: the Honeypot bar is currently closed for refurbishment

#### Spotlight on...

This month features the father & daughter combo who run two of the most respected real ale outlets in the area. And so we shine the RuRAD Spotlight on the...

#### Beehive & Angels Micro-pub

Landlord of the Beehive pub in Ripley, Steve Cresswell worked at the Aston Hall hospital as a nursing assistant from age 18 or so which is where he met his wife Lisa. He gained his experience in the licensing trade by doing shifts at the staff social club and talks about "proper Pedigree, in 18 gallon casks, left for a week before serving". With his love of music, he also started running discos which has been a constant in his life ever since.

Steve and Lisa married in 1987 and remained in Aston while always thinking about getting a pub of their own. In the area where they were living, the rents being asked were too steep and they eventually decided to buy a property, and in 1993 found the Beehive on Peasehill Road, Ripley. This is an ex-Home Ales pub (you can still see the sign on the wall outside) which had been acquired by Scottish & Newcastle a few years earlier.

Recognising that the pub needed to attract more customers and inspired by the Stable Bar walkers pub at Monsal Head, in 2012 Steve started to plan and build the Honeypot "pub within a pub" in the large garden. This was initially established in a small brick outhouse with the ales being kept at the correct temperature using the type of cooling pipes that are often seen in beer festivals.

Over the years, the place grew "like Topsy" with the addition of a dedicated "cellar" and a 24 foot skittle alley, later expanded to 26 foot and moved deeper into the garden. The skittle alley was later covered over to create an open-sided seating area for use during the 2020/21 lockdown periods. As a result of the Honeypot's increasing popularity, Steve eventually recognised that the whole garden area needed to be reorganised. To this end, planning permission (ref: AVA/2021/0251) was applied for to establish the Honeypot as the main licensed outlet on the site, which process is still on-going although Amber Valley are dragging their heels somewhat in approving the scheme, even though there are no objections from the neighbours.

As has already been mentioned, apart from beer (and Lisa obviously), Steve's other great love is music, and (in non-pandemic years) the pub hosts Buzz Fest, a celebration of live music held in the garden for about 10 weeks between June and August. Parallel with the day job, Steve also collects and plays vinyl DJ sets once a month as the Groover (Ripley's very own Cat in the Hat). He even played a 2 hour set during the lockdown periods, transmitting via Facebook although their clever algorithms would sometimes detect a copyright infringement and the stream would be cut off temporarily. The pub supports regular dominoes nights and competes in local skittles competitions. Steve also hosted a Picnic in the Pub (in those pre-Covid days) when families were invited to bring their own food and gather in the garden - it proved to be so successful that it is likely to be repeated for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (AV Council and building work permitting).

In 2016 (or thereabouts) Steve took over the former stables buildings in the top corner of Belper Market Place and converted it into the Angels Micro-pub. The stables originally serviced the Angel Inn on one side (now No.28 Café but before that a Salvation Army Hall) and the former Kings Head pub (no, not the Old Kings Head on Days Lane) on the other. It appears that the licensee of the Kings Head between 1828 and 1842 was one Martha Cresswell - how spooky is that? Once kitted out, Steve ran the pub himself and handed over caretaker duties for the Beehive to Dave and Mandy Pidcock who went on to keep the Thorn Tree in Waingroves. Eventually, Steve encouraged his daughter Katy to take over Angels and once it was clear that the pub would be able to provide her with a living, she gave up her rather unchallenging job with Sainsbury's. Currently open from Thursday to Sunday, the pub offers 9 or 10 gravity fed cask ales plus about 10 ciders and with regular live music on

As for awards, both the Beehive and Angels are regularly included in the Good Beer Guide and both were recent winners of the Amber Valley CAMRA Cider POTY: Angels in 2020 and the Beehive in 2022 (when Angels also came 3rd). This is largely because Steve and

Katy take the trouble to regularly source their ciders from producers in the counties of the South West and other traditional apple-growing areas.

On 14th February 2022, Steve turned 60 and, old romantic that he is, organised a candlelit dinner with Lisa in a local up-market restaurant... Nah, not really! He actually gathered the family together and flew to Rome to watch England overcome Italy in the 6 Nations Rugby. And in May this year, Katy is to be married, with the reception being held at the Beehive (one way or another). She has banned her dad from organising the music - the Father of the Bride does have other responsibilities after all - but he may be allowed to put on a short vinyl set. To bring things up to date, Steve and Katy organised their Dark Side of the Room (part 1) beer festival, held at Angels in January which proved to be extremely popular. Part 2 will take place at the end of March (see the beer festival section for details) and they have ideas for other themed beer festivals throughout the year.

After talking to Steve at the Beehive pub to put this article together, I was left with the impression of a man who likes people and cares about the community he serves. **Snug Dave** 

## Angels Micro Pub

29 Market Place Belper DE56 1FZ

Serving up to nine (or more) real ales from the barrel and a similar number of ciders & perries

Amber Valley CAMRA Cider POTY Winner 2020

Amber Valley CAMRA Mild Trail Winner 2019

#### Out & About

The first article is a view from a couple outside the area and they had also come a long way to visit the DSOTR (Part 1) beer festival at **Angels**. Since Part 2 is to take place at the end of March, David's article might give readers a taste of what to expect. Also Wirral (Part 2) and a trip around Digbeth, Birmingham.

#### Belper and DSOTR @ Angels

Having read in the January issue of "In The Sticks" that the Angels micro-pub in Belper would be holding a beer festival featuring dark beers, my wife Carol and I decided that it would make a good day out. On Friday, 21st January, we travelled by train from Cheadle Hulme to Belper, changing at Crewe and Derby, with most of the journey being through rural parts of Cheshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire so very peaceful and enjoyable.

Arrival into Belper was shortly before midday where we headed off towards the Devonshire on Bridge Street as their weekday lunch menu features some tasty looking offerings. The bar featured four beers from Dancing Duck plus Pedigree. Bearing in mind the strength of beers to come later, Dancing Duck Ay Up (3.9%) was our choice here and it was in fine form. After enjoying a tasty and good value meal, we were set up nicely for the afternoon. A little way further along Bridge Street is Rumours Retro Bar where the sole cask ale offering was Ay Up again. I would have preferred to have tried something different but no matter, it's a fine beer. About turn, back over the road and into the George & Dragon where the choice was Black Hole x 2, Falstaff x 2 and Bass. Again keeping the ABVs low Falstaff 3 Faze (3.8%) did the job, another beer in fine form. The next pub along the road was the Lion Hotel, where most of the clientele were dining. The cask ale line-up here was Pedigree, Wainwright and Thornbridge Brother Rabbit (4.0%) which was our choice and again was well-served. Our next destination was the Railway on King Street. Owned by Lincoln Green brewery, six of their beers plus Brains The Rev James and St Austell Proper Job were the cask ales and whilst so far we had been deliberately going for beers with a lower ABV the butterscotch flavoured Buttermuch at 5.5% couldn't be resisted and it was very tasty.



There were many more pubs that we would have liked to have visited but we had to remember why we were here and headed straight to the main event: Angels Micro Pub on the Market Place for their Dark Side of the Room beer festival. Our arrival was timed perfectly as a group were just vacating a table so we were soon making inroads into the 12 beer beer-list of which we managed eight. All beers were available in thirds, halves and pints though you wouldn't get through many of the latter with beers of these strengths. With a price range of £3.20 to a top price of £5.00 a pint (for beers 10% and above) these were bargain prices. The beers are served from a cool area at the back of the bar and all were perfectly cool and in tip-top condition. We enjoyed all our choices but absolute favourites were Wilde Childe Thunder In Paradise (4.9%) and its big sibling 4 Dimensional Manifold (9.5%), these being coconut and chocolate beers. Also the three big Imperial Stouts, though all with an

individual flavour - Rat Brewery Leningrat (9.0%), Alter Ego Stockholm Syndrome (11.0%) and Eyam Imperial Black Death also 11.0%.

A tremendous festival - I don't know if it's a one-off or more regular but we'll watch out for another one in the future. Fortunately after that alcohol intake our brains were spared having to try and work out any train problems as all were running to time and we managed Belper-Derby, Derby-Sheffield, Sheffield-Stockport and Stockport-Cheadle Hulme in just under two and a half hours. David Sheldon.



The Wirral, 17th October: Part 2

With the weather again poor the next day, we decided to take the car down the eastern Wirral to visit some new pubs. We arrived too early at the GBG Refreshment Rooms at Rock Ferry, so marked time with a walk alongside the Mersey whilst the weather was better. It is situated adjacent to the crumbling remains of a ferry terminal and pier, much of which has disappeared into the river but would have been a splendid setting in years past with several palatial houses nearby. The grand looking premises are mainly used for dining with an extensive range of down to earth good quality meals attracting many older clientele to the reduced price midweek specials. Inside it has an air of former opulence including a Birkenhead Brewery etched glass window, although I did not feel that the ale quality justified GBG status. The ales were HMS Conway (a house beer allegedly from JW Lees), Big Bog Padi and Brimstage Trapper's Hat . A very interesting experience and we would return for a meal in due course. Moving on and into the nightmare road junctions in Birkenhead, we eventually parked up after several laps and walked to the GBG Gallaghers Traditional Pub. The barman was most attentive, offering samples and even joined us at our table for a chat. It's exactly as described in the pub name with numerous pictures and memorabilia from the local naval history. My Trappers Hat and Hawkshead Mosaic Pale were both excellent with Mauldons Blackberry Porter and White Rat also on. To the rear of the building is an unusual and extensive beer garden which features an Astroturf "lawn" and a retractable roof to suit the weather conditions. This is a superb pub but unfortunately it is the only local GBG entry despite innumerable other pubs in the town.

Moving on to our next accommodation back in the north at Great Meols, we got straight back out and walked to the station for a train to West Kirby. The Homebrew Tap here was open and whilst not serving any cask ales it did feature a good range of keg beers of which the barman was keen to offer samples. It's a standard micro-pub format with some outdoor seating at the front. For the record I had Hacker Pschorr Kellerbier and Fierce Moose Mousse Stout & Hazy IPA. On to the GBG West Kirby Tap, the Spitting Feathers tap-house which is somewhat like a Western saloon bar with some raised seating areas. The barmaid had good beer knowledge and assisted our choice of ales. I had their excellent Night-shift black IPA and also their own cider which I did not think was very good. I also had guest ales - Redwillow Feckless and Neptune Forecast Godiva, both very good. There were 2 more S/F ales and also Black Lodge Hundred Dollar Volvo which I did not have time to try. It was then back on the train for the short ride to Hoylake for a first visit to the GBG Black Toad micropub. Particularly friendly staff here but terrible writing on the beer chalkboard from my photo I think the cask ales were Neptune Saratoga, Twisted Wheel Sunday Sessions, Brimstage Scarecrow and Wilde Child Gimme S'more. In the enjoyable chaos I forgot to record what I drank but it was good with a few kegs and a fridge full of cans to boot. We then walked to the GBG Plasterers Arms but unfortunately this had already closed well before the advertised time, so no return visit here and we walked a long way on the seafront back to Meols. Overall pub wise it was a bit of a mixed bag but there are some good ales to be had and plenty more pubs still to visit on a further occasion. Chris P Duck.

### Pete and Tracey welcome you to THE RAILWAY

25 King Street, Belper

Serving 8 Cask Ales, 6 Craft Beers and Real Cider

Quiz Night every Wednesday Live Music at week-ends

Food served until 8.00 pm Family and Dog Friendly Fantastic Outdoor Garden

#### Digbeth, Birmingham, 3rd Feb. 2022

On a bright Thursday, our group (The Last Drinking School) of old pals (and devoted hanger-on-ers) congregated in **Digbeth**, an old part of Central Birmingham just south of Moor Street and New Street stations, and with strong Irish connections, and soon to acquire tram connections. We plan our real ale tours using Out & About, GBG and train timetables, with some of our members travelling from the Smoke, others from Merseyside, but most from North, South, East and West Midlands. Our rendezvous was the GBG Anchor, a 16 minute walk from New

Street (25p CAMRA discount). We numbered 13, which is a new record for our cross country outings that hitherto varied from 2 to 12. Hostelries were generally pleased to see our roving posse entering on an otherwise quiet early afternoon. Hand-pumps at the Anchor had Halton Turner Babyface (3.8%) and Primo (4.5%), and Titanic Plum Porter (4.9%), all good and we stayed for a second, while the pleasant barman allowed us to eat our industrial quantities of home-made pasties and sausage rolls inside. Some impressive tiling is displayed on floors and walls on the way to the toilets in this Grade II listed building.

After stopping outside for a group photo, the next stop was the **White Swan** a few minutes down the road. We again took over the empty tables by a long bar and continued chewing our packed lunches. Cask ales were **Mallinson** Galaxy (3.9%), **Blue Bee** Ponderosa Pale (5.2%). **Hobsons** Best Bitter (3.8%), Fixed

Wheel Wheelie Pale (4.1%), while some went for Harry's Scrummage cider (6.2%). There was more of a trek to the Woodman (CAMRA vouchers accepted), heading 1 km north-east back across the tram-works towards the canal, where we sampled Castle Rock Harvest Pale (3.8%), and Blackheath Stout (5.0%) & No Brakes IPA (5.9%) from Fixed Wheel. A photo is taken of the hand-pumps in each pub in case poor handwriting is ever encountered on scoresheets. Barstaff usually scarper when a lens is produced, but the fair colleen here put on the biggest smile we saw all day.

Being before 3.00 pm, the **Norton** was not yet open, so we trudged back on now well familiar coned off, hi-vis areas to alight at the **Old Crown**, that boasts of being the oldest pub in Birmingham. We ordered **Eagle** (née Charles Wells) Bombardier Amber Beer (4.1%), **Caledonian** Deuchers IPA (3.8%), **Attic** Intuition (4.4%). The Deuchars IPA was considered slightly sour by three of our

party, but was readily swapped by the landlord - albeit one replacement, although consumed, was not enjoyed, so others resorted to kegs **Beavertown** Gamma Ray (5.4%) and Neck Oil (4.3%).

Passing the (once Bird's) Custard Factory (now an art venue) and the JFK memorial mosaic, we popped into the Ruin but no cask ale was to be had, so all 13 of us popped straight out again pronto, and once more retraced our (now faltering) steps. By now the renowned Lamp Tavern was a yomp too far to visit on this occasion sadly, so we headed north towards the train termini, with some calling in at Cherry Red's for Birmingham Pale Brummie (4.00%), Dig Brew Potion (4.2%) and, ahem, Attic Helles lager (5.2%). We've been to Digbeth before, and we'll go to Digbeth again, and perhaps the tram extension will be running by then. Ginger Baker.

#### Beer Festival Diary - Near and Not so Near

1st-6th Mar. St David's Day Festival. Gardeners Rest, 105 Neepsend Lane, Sheffield. 30 real ales from 9 Welsh breweries 3rd-5th Mar. 45th Loughborough Beer Festival. Polish Club, True Lovers Walk off William St, Loughborough. 60+ ales 3rd-5th Mar. Magna Real Ale & Music Festival. Magna Science Adventure Centre, Rotherham. 200+ ales 3rd-6th Mar. The 2nd 189 Micro-pub Annual Beer Festival. 189 Blenheim Drive, Allestree, Derby. 18 cask ales 3rd-6th Mar. Burton Ale Trail around 11 pubs. www.facebook.com/groups/burtonaletrail 4th-5th Mar. Sheffield Indie Beer Festival. Abbeydale Picture House, 387 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield 24th-26th Mar. Holly Bush Inn Annual Beer Festival, Makeney 30th Mar-10th Apr. Wetherspoon Real Ale Festival. All Wetherspoon pubs, www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk 31st Mar-2nd Apr. West Bridgford Hockey Club Beer Festival. Loughborough Road, West Bridgford 31st Mar-3rd Apr. Dark Side of the Room (part 2) Dark & Delicious Beer Festival. Angels micro-pub, Belper 1st-2nd Apr. The Great Derbyshire Beer Festival. The Chocolate Factory, Siddals Road, Derby, www.greatderbyshirebeerfestival.co.uk

3rd-5th Mar. Chappel Winter Ales Festival. East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel. 60+ winter ales
3rd-5th Mar. 34th Wigan Beer Festival. Robin Park Sports Hall, Loire Drive, Wigan. 70+ ales
4th-5th Mar. Rugby Beer Festival. Arnold House, Elsee Road, Rugby. 30+ ales, cider
9th-13th Mar. The Old Windmill Beer Festival. 22-23 Spon Street, Coventry
24th-27th Mar. 13th Wirral Beer Festival. Hulme Hall, 23 Bolton Road, Port Sunlight. 80 real ales, 80 craft beers
30th Mar.-2nd Apr. Wandsworth Common Beer Festival, Le Gothique Bar, John Archer Way, Windmill Rd, Wandsworth
6th-9th Apr. Newcastle Beer & Cider Festival. Students Union, 2 Sandyford Road, Newcastle. 15+ ales, cider & perry

We advise confirmation of dates and times before attending the above festivals, as changes may occur.

Well that's all for this issue folks. If you have any info or news which could be included in a future issue of "In the Sticks" please contact

Charisma Bypass on 07891 365887 or Snug Dave at snugdave@outlook.com by the 23rd of the month.

#### Edited by Snug Dave

Many thanks to all our contributors and the "In The Sticks" distribution team: Bald Eagle, The Baron, Big Foz, Charisma Bypass, Del Boy, Jedi, HH, Konrad, and Sooty. Apologies if I've missed anyone. Thanks also to our advertisers without whom this newsletter would not get published.



Victorian Pub in the CAMRA heritage pub guide (Ilkeston's best kept secret!)

A selection of the finest cask ales, ciders, craft beers and bar snacks

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