



RURAD

"In the Sticks"

LEADMILL BREWERY
and BOTTLE BROOK
BREWERY
Producers of Traditional
Hand Crafted Real Ales

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/magazines) along with digital copies of other local beer-centric publications.



Beer & Pub News

The **Talbot** in Ripley was sold at auction on 28th September for £212k through SDL Property Auctions. The property was sold subject to a lease dated 2 December 2019 for a term of 7 years so Rob remains in charge. There was no mention of the sale on the **Talbot Taphouse** Facebook page.

There is a new (nano) brewery in town called **Dungeon Brewing** based in Hilton, Derbyshire brewing cask and craft (canned) beer. An early adopter was the **Market Tavern**, South Normanton where **Haze Of Hecate** (5.0%) on cask was available in August with the **Smithfield** in Derby a close second serving **This Is A Joke** (4.9%) in September. **Dungeon Brewing** also had a presence at the Nottingham CAMRA Robin Hood Beer & Cider Festival.

The **Just Beer** micro-pub in Newark also commissioned a beer from **Dungeon** (**Side By Side**, 5.5%) which could ONLY be sampled at the 20/20 Fest* in Newark. Which took place on 20th-24th September. D'oh!

*This is a collaborative event jointly hosted by the **Fox And Crown** and **Just Beer** which

NOVEMBER 2023

this year offered 40 beers over 5 days. "In The Sticks" will try to be better informed next time (if there is a next time).

The **Bunny Hop** micro-pub in Langley Mill closed up shop on 5th October for reasons explained in the following (edited) Facebook post...

"It is with great sadness we announce the Bunny will be closing from Thursday 5th October, and will be no longer trading. Covid debt, cost of living crisis, equipment failure and the huge increases on trade and utility costs have left us in the position that the business is no longer able to trade in a profitable manner. We have had a blast the last 6 years and appreciate every one of you that have supported us in this venture and will definitely miss the fun laughter and sometimes tears that this life has enabled us to experience." Simon and Charlotte xxx

Tracy and all the staff welcome you to the

OLD OAK INN

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East Midlands Pub of the Year 2016

Serving a wide selection of beers
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LEADMILL plus Guests Beers

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The **Millipede** micro-pub in Stapleford announced via their Facebook page on the 18th October that they were closing with immediate effect, having been trading for 5 years. A subsequent post stated that Simon has now officially retired.

It is reported that the **Fox & Hounds** in Coxbench (now apparently rebranded as just **The Fox**) re-opened under new management - Leo & Amelia - on Sunday 22nd October (delayed from the 21st due to the floods and road closures). The plan is to open from Wednesday to Sunday up until Christmas and the New Year and look at extending the opening hours thereafter. From the photos on Facebook, there appears to be 3 hand-pulls on the bar but what they are dispensing could not be determined.

The **Alter Ego** brewery tap in Alfreton (B2 Salcombe Road) is now open every Saturday

from 2.00 until 8.00. Food is also being served in the form of pizzas and (sometimes) pop-up food vendors, and I am led to believe that you can get a pizza and a pint for a tenner. A shuttle bus from the **Tip Inn**, Loscoe will sometimes be running - check Facebook for the details. **Charisma Bypass**.

On a recent visit to Birmingham, Big Al reported that he had been charged £6.40 for a pint of cask ale at the **Old Contemptibles** near Snow Hill Station. This was on 14th October, a Saturday, and he wondered whether "surge pricing" was in operation? The pub has been approached for comment (as the newspapers like to say).

CAMRA has whittled the National POTY 2023 candidates down to the last four, which are (drum roll)...

Nelson Arms (Tonbridge)
Tamworth Tap (Tamworth)
Trafalgar Hotel (Ramsey, Isle of Man)
The Beer Engine (Skipton)

The overall winner will be announced in January 2024.

The next Mansfield & Ashfield CAMRA branch meeting will be held at the **Scruffy Dog**, Sutton-in-Ashfield on 9th November at 8.00 pm. There is no meeting in December.

Contributors: Big Al, Charisma Bypass, the Jedi, Snug Dave, Tweedle Dee

Sally, Jean & Steve
welcome you to the...

ROYAL OAK

55 Green Lane, Ockbrook, DE72 3SE
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Lunches Served: Every Day from 12.00
Evening Meals: Mon to Sat

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RuRAD Snippets

Regular contributor, Chris P Duck, made one of many visits to Chesterfield back in April and reported favourably about a couple of pubs on the Chatsworth Road in the Brampton area of Chesterfield. The **Real Ale Corner** changed hands in July but hopefully, it's as

good as it ever was...

The **Real Ale Corner** was opening earlier than usual so we made our way to this, the furthest out point on our trip. This had a tap takeover from **Eyam** with their **Mompesson's Calling** (5.5%), **All Fall Down** (6.5%) & **Black Death** (7.0%) all deemed too strong so between us we settled for **Best Bitter** (4.1%) or **Quarantine** (4.5%). Both were very good and served by a genial landlord in a good micro-pub atmosphere. Very close by is the **Tap House**, my first visit as I had never been here during opening times. It's a good old traditional pub with an excellent selection of eight cask ales. I had **Firebird Paleface** with the others trying **Durham White Gold**, **Thornbridge Sequoia** and **Whim Red House Ruby Porter**. Other ales here were **Torrside I'm Spartacus** (6.8%) and the more usual **Bass**, **Harvest Pale** and **Landlord**, making this a very worthwhile visit. **Chris P Duck**.

As was mentioned in the July issue of "In The Sticks", the **Stilton Cheese Inn**, Somerby near Melton Mowbray was shortlisted for the CAMRA East Midlands POTY competition. Somerby is a small, pretty village in rural Leicestershire and the pub itself is a traditional, family run business. I was made very welcome by the landlady, Carol Evans, and we had a brief discussion about how little publicity there was about the East Midlands POTY competition - all very good-natured and non-judgemental, obviously. The pub is popular for food and there were plenty of diners in on the Thursday I visited. There were 5 ales on the bar from **Grainstore** (Oakham), **Milestone** (Newark) and **Round Corner** (Melton Mowbray), plus **Oakham Citra** and **Pedigree**. I was hoping to remember the names of the beers... but well, who was I kidding? If you are heading in the Melton Mowbray or Oakham direction, I can recommend calling in. **Snug Dave**.

April and the team welcome you to the

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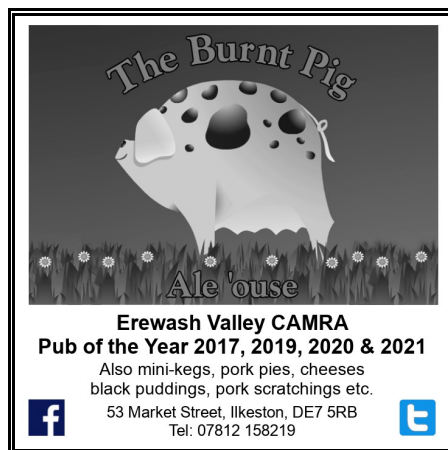
Real Ale, Real Cider, Real Fire
Real Pub

In The Papers

The Nottingham Post (11th October) reported that the **Salutation** in Keyworth re-opened at the end of September after a 12 month period of closure. The pub, owned by Heineken Star Pubs & Bars underwent a £275k refurbishment before the new licensees, Paul Keeling and Tracy Karas, moved in. The photo in the paper showed

Castle Rock Harvest Pale, **T T Landlord** and **Adnams Southwold Bitter** on the bar.

The Nottingham Post (12th October) reported that the **Hand & Heart** on Derby Road near Canning Circus, Nottingham re-opened on 12th October. The pub was bought (freehold) by the Pub People group based in Alfreton and had been closed for about 15 months so there was some cleaning up and redecoration to do. Pub People managing director Andrew Crawford said: "It was horrendous when we first walked in - it was damp and mouldy. We had to have a filtration system in to draw out all the moisture and the heating on to dry it out. That was the biggest process". The Facebook page photos show 6 hand-pumps on the bar and, since opening, there have been offerings from **Castle Rock**, **Dancing Duck**, **Lenton Lane**, **Black Iris**, **Pheasantry**, **Beermats**, **Abbeylea** and **Thornbridge** plus **Bass**. This is in addition to a range of craft beers, lagers etc.



Out & About

The first article is from the redoubtable **Chris P Duck** who travelled to Stamford back in March...

Stamford, 23rd Mar. 2023

After changing trains at Leicester I arrived at Stamford accompanied by Mythical John and Showbiz Steve. Our first call was at the very grand (and expensive) **George Hotel** where, after getting our drinks, we were able to sit outside in the partially covered courtyard garden. It is believed to be over 900 years old and famous visitors (ourselves not included) have included Daniel Defoe, Charles I and William III. It also has a "gallows" sign stretching across the street similar to that formerly seen at the **Green Man** in Ashbourne. With a maze of corridors, impressive historical artifacts and uniformed staff it was perhaps not quite what we were accustomed to but the beer was OK with **Grainstore Triple B**, **Lacons Legacy** and **Adnams Broadside** available. Not far away at the **Bull & Swan** we found 3 local ales on the bar of this 400 year old coaching inn. We sat in the low-beamed bar to admire another historical gem. The ales here were **Nene Valley Simple Pleasures**, **Grainstore Red Kite** and **Priest's House** from **Stoney Ford**, now

owned by **Rutland Brewing/Grainstore**.

Walking back over the river to the main town we fortuitously arrived at the **London Inn** just before a torrential storm. A chain style pub but within another historic building we found the beer to be of decent quality. These were **Lord Maximus** and **JHB** from **Oakham**, the **Priest's House** again and **Doom Bar**. After the rain cleared, we made the short journey to the **Golden Fleece**, an **Everards** pub that I had not been in before. It was very lacklustre with an indifferent barmaid and moderate quality ale with only **Tiger** and **Old Original** on cask sticks.

Pete and Tracey welcome you to

THE RAILWAY

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Star Bars Cask Ale Finalist 2019

Quiz Night every Wednesday
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Food served until 8.00 pm

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Fantastic Outdoor Garden

Moving quickly on to yet another old building, **Paten & Co**, which has a range of a dozen keg beers and ciders. We took our drinks upstairs to sit by a window overlooking the market square where a funfair was being assembled. It is a fine building on three levels, although the beer selection is not particularly appealing to me. On leaving here and deciding that the funfair was not for us, we reached the **Millstone** where we found an enthusiastic landlady and utilised the large patio garden now that the sun had returned. Another very old pub I enjoyed the **Grainstore Ten Fifty** which was my best drink so far, with the more predictable offerings of **T T Boltmaker**, **Tribute** and **Oakham Citra** also available.

Disappointment next as after a walk to the furthest out pub, the **GBG Jolly Brewer**, we found a note on the door to the effect that opening had been delayed until 5.00 pm so we never got to visit this worthy pub. Retracing our steps brought us to the **Green Man**, a 200 year old coaching inn which has a fairly interesting and good quality ale selection of **Nene Valley Manhattan Project**, **Tydd Steam Scoundrel**, **Woodfordes Wherry** and **Harvest Pale** from **Castle Rock**. Next call was at **Mama Liz's**, this being an American style bar area which morphs into a street food and music venue at weekends. The beer from **Nene Valley** and **Oakham** was not especially good on this occasion.

Back into the main town area we visited the **Lord Burghley** which was a busy town drinkers pub with local tradesmen arriving after work. Located in a terraced row of 300-year-old buildings, **Grainstore Ten Fifty** was the pick of the ales with three more

regular offerings available. Just around the corner is the GBG **Tobie Norris**, yet another very old building dating back over 700 years but only converted to pub use in 2005. Here we sat with a couple we had briefly met earlier who were staying at the George Hotel and were going back for their evening meal with an allowance of £90 towards it - I dread to think of the bill afterwards. My **Hopshackle Special** was my best of the day with the 4 other ales being fairly routine and disappointingly not local. Whilst that selection may not be the best, the award winning building itself is outstanding and is certainly a must visit.

On to another GBG pub, the **Kings Head**, a comparatively new stone building dating from the 19th century. They had 2 ales from **Bakers Dozen** (*Electric Landlady* & *Stamford Pale*) and another from the **Stoney Ford** range (*Willow Dance*). Good to see good quality local ales featuring here, although it can be somewhat dining orientated at times. For some reason, probably the rain again, we went into the **Stamford Post** which is a Wetherspoon outlet. I had previously found this rather poor and did so again with an average **Grainstore Rutland Osprey** the pick of a poor selection. Back to the train after this and I can certainly recommend a visit to Stamford for a good range of quality ales and more particularly the splendid historic buildings that house most of the hostleries. When back in Derby Steve had a longish wait for his train to Belper so we called across the road at the **Victoria** which is acquiring a good name for quality ales - on this occasion we both had **Front Row Wot Its Caramel**. **Chris P Duck**.

SMITHFIELD

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**Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year
2018 - 2022**

**East Midlands Pub of the Year
2019**

Tickers Paradise, 9 ever changing ales
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Pork Pies & Fresh Cobs available daily

Fantastic Beer Garden right next to
the river

I recently headed to Shepshed, not too far from where I live south of Derby, during the warm and sunny first week of September.

Shepshed, 8th Sept. 2023

Just a couple of GBG pubs in Shepshed which are the **Black Swan** and the **Hall Croft Tap**, the latter being a **Charnwood** tap house. The **Black Swan** is an attractive, old-fashioned, multi-roomed pub with a modest garden to the rear. This Stonegate pub has been newly taken on (in April) by a young couple (Alice & Fred) following the retirement of the previous landlord and, according to one of the

locals, the place has seen a new lease of life. I was certainly made to feel welcome and the locals were happy to engage. Beers on the bar were **Bass**, **TT Landlord**, **Black Sheep Finisher**, **Ringwood Forty Niner** and **GK Abbot**. Looking at the Facebook posts, snack food and pop-up food vans seem to figure prominently.

I then walked down to the **Hall Croft Tap** which is a micro-pub owned by **Charnwood**. It was opened in November 2020 but suffered from Covid lockdown restrictions for a while so really has only been open for a couple of years. The pub has two main rooms but outside is a courtyard area and a spacious garden reached by a set of steps. I received a friendly welcome from the landlord, Chris Allingham, which is always a good start. Four **Charnwood** beers are usually available with **Salvation** and **Vixen** being standard. **Snug Dave**.

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

"In The Sticks" was recently contacted by Scott Spencer who authors a blog called **Micropub Adventures** describing his visits to pubs and breweries around the country. Scott has generously allowed "In The Sticks" to reprint his articles although the photographs cannot be included - for the full blog experience, please visit www.micropubadventures.co.uk. The article selected features a visit to...

Manchester & Rochdale, 22nd Oct

A Sunday out around Manchester. Started the day visiting the amazing **Castlefield Viaduct** run by the National Trust before heading out firstly to Salford Quays to visit the recently opened **Hideaway Brewing Company Taproom**. From here I headed to Piccadilly visiting **Sureshot Brewery Taproom** in the railway arches. Over to Victoria for the newly opened **Victoria Tap** on the station. Finished off with **Old Post Office Ale House** in Castleton and **D'Ale House** and the **Pint Pot**.

Located next to Deansgate Railway Station, the 330-metre long Grade II-listed **Castlefield Viaduct** was built in 1892 by Heenan and Froude, the engineers who worked on the Blackpool Tower, the viaduct was used to carry heavy rail traffic in and out of Manchester Central Station and the Great Northern Warehouse until 1969. It has been transformed into a "Garden in the Sky", and

is really a must visit if you get time while in Manchester.



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Over to Salford Quays next, easily accessible by either bus or tram although engineering work on the tram line today so jumped on the number 50 bus. My call here was to **Hideaway Brewing Co**. This brewery started up in 2020, with this taproom opening around 8 weeks ago. A really warm welcome from Dan and Nat in here and a really great looking taproom. The colours look great (Orange and Black). Great to be able to see the brewery setup whilst in the taproom, and the kitchen is being worked on to open soon serving food in the taproom. A lot going for this taproom, really glad I managed to make it over here. A great selection of beers on the bar all brewed in house. 6 keg beers available with a selection of pales and IPAs alongside a Raspberry Wheat Beer. I started with **Rush**, a 4.5% Californian Common and followed with **Tailgate** a delicious and tasty 5.6% West Coast IPA.

Headed over to Manchester Piccadilly next, and located behind the station is **Sureshot Brewery Taproom**. The brewery taproom is located in one railway arch, the brewery being in the next. This opened in 2022 and was formerly the space used by **Track Brewery** before they moved. A long room on entering with the bar to the righthand side. A great selection of keg beers on the bar here. 10 keg beers to choose from alongside a large selection of cans and bottles in a fridge next to the bar. I went with a sour beer here. **Put On My Raving Shoes** was a Raspberry, Pomegranate and Sour Cherry sour beer, really tart and fruity.

Jumping on a tram from Sureshot at Piccadilly and heading towards Victoria Station. The newly opened **Victoria Tap** is located within the station concourse and opened recently on the 10th October 2023. A beautiful conversion from a station building to a pub, railway themed with a beer garden to the rear, where you can sit and watch trams departing and arriving into Manchester Victoria. Love the beer board behind the bar, designed as an old train departure board. 4 cask ales on the front of the bar, alongside 19 keg beers poured from the rear of the bar. Lots of choice here for everyone with a huge range of beer styles. They also stock a

decent range of bottled and canned beers. I went with **Santiago** from Windsor based **Two Flints Brewery**. A delicious tropical hazy pale and very hoppy.

A short jump on the train from Manchester Victoria to Castleton, and a couple of minutes walk brought me to **The Old Post Office Ale House**. This opened in 2016 in the former Castleton Post Office (the sign being displayed in the pub). A really friendly welcome and a popular busy pub. A small beer garden also to the rear of the pub. I visited here previously just after opening in March 2016. A great line up of 5 cask beers on the bar ranging from light to dark, alongside a number of keg options and ciders. I went with

Arizona from nearby Heywood based **Phoenix Brewery**. A really easy drinking and sessionable pale ale.

Another short jump on the train, this time to Rochdale. When getting off the train its either a 10 minute walk or wait for a tram up to Rochdale Interchange. My first call here is to **D'Ale House**. This micro-pub opened in June 2021 and was converted from a former shop. Really beautifully done out with wood, the bar being on a raised area from the seating area. Another fantastic line up of beers here, a choice of 5 cask beers and 12 keg beers, as well as a selection of cans and bottles. Another local beer for me in here, **Odin** from Radcliffe, Greater Manchester

based **Brightside Brewing Company**. A fresh and light pale ale, really easy drinking. A short walk brings me to **The Pint Pot**. A small one roomed micro-pub which was very busy this evening due to being their weekly quiz. Located on a street with a number of other small bars and restaurants. This re-opened in July 2021 following Covid. Small 2 seats to sit outside at the front. 4 cask ales on the bar here alongside a number of keg lines. A range of breweries from around the country which was good to see. I went with **Minstrel** from Uckfield, East Sussex based **Only With Love Brewery**. Described as a single hopped sunshine ale. A really delicious beer. **Scott Spencer**.

Beer Festival Diary - Near and Not so Near

- 2nd-6th Nov. The Mallard Ale'oween Beer Festival. The Mallard, Worksop Station. 20 ales, 4 ciders
3rd-4th Nov. 7th St Alphege Beer Festival. Olive Bird Hall, Church Hill Road, Solihull, West Midlands
8th-12th Nov. Old Windmill Beer Festival. 22-23 Spon Street, Coventry. 24 ales, 20 ciders
9th-11th Nov. Kidderminster Beer Festival. Town Hall, Vicar Street, Kidderminster. 40+ ales, 15 ciders
10th-11th Nov. Lichfield Autumn Beer & Cider Festival. Lichfield Guildhall, Bore Street, Lichfield. 30+ ales, cider
15th-19th Nov. Dead Poets Beer Festival. 38 Chapel Street, Holbrook. 20+ ales, cider & gins
16th-18th Nov. West Bridgford Hockey Club Beer Festival. Loughborough Road, West Bridgford. 10+ ales, cider
23rd-25th Nov. Dudley Winter Ales Festival. Dudley Town Hall, St James Road, Dudley. 60+ ales, craft, cider/wine
24th-26th Nov. 3rd Sheaf View Winter Beer Festival. 25 Gleadless Road, Sheffield


- 2nd-4th Nov. Teddington Beer Festival. Landmark Arts Centre, Ferry Road, Teddington. 60+ ales, keg, cider plus live music
2nd-6th Nov. Darlington Snooker Club Beer Festival. 1 Corporation Street, Darlington. 30 ales
9th-11th Nov. 41st Egham Ale & Cider Festival. United Services Club, 111 Spring Rise, Egham. 60+ ales
9th-11th Nov. 24th Oxford Beer Festival. Oxford Town Hall, St Aldates Street, Oxford. 120 ales, 20 ciders
9th-11th Nov. Gainsborough Beer Festival. Gainsborough Old Hall, Parnell Street, Gainsborough. 50+ ales, cider, wines
10th-11th Nov. Bury Beer Festival. The Met, Market Street, Bury
10th-11th Nov. 30th Alloa Real Ale & Cider Festival. Alloa Town Hall, Mars Hill, Alloa. 60 ales, 24 ciders
10th-12th Nov. 11th Beccles Autumn Beer Festival. Beccles Public Hall, Smallgate, Beccles. 35 ales, cider, craft beer
16th-18th Nov. 21st Twickenham Beer Festival. York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham. 70+ ales, cider
16th-19th Nov. 16th Wirral Beer Festival. Hulme Hall, Port Sunlight, Wirral. 80 cask, 80 keg, bottled beer, gin & rum
16th-19th Nov. 24th Bristol Beer Festival. City Hall, College Green, Bristol. 80+ ales, 30 ciders
16th-19th Nov. White Horse Old Ale Beer Festival. 17 Parsons Green, London
17th-18th Nov. Otley Beer Festival. Otley Cricket Club, Cross Green, Pool Road, Otley. 60 ales, cider
25th Nov. 22nd Annual Celtic Beer Festival. St Austell Brewery, Trevarthian Road, St Austell. 100+ ales
28th Nov-2nd Dec. 39th Pigs Ear Beer Festival. The Round Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney, London. 175 ales
30th Nov-1st Dec. The Hope Dark Beer Festival. 48 West Street, Carshalton, Surrey

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 - too many to mention but they know who they are. Thanks also to our advertisers without whom this newsletter would not get published.



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Amber Valley CAMRA Cider POTY
Winner 2020
Amber Valley CAMRA Mild Trail
Winner 2019



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