

# Mild & Bitter

Keeping Derby CAMRA drinkers informed since 1975

## It's All Happening in May!

On **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May** an innovative initiative gets proceedings underway with a craft and cask social – see page 4 for details. On **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May** we're having a Mild evening, visiting some pubs serving the dark stuff which is traditionally celebrated by CAMRA in May. Meet in the Victoria, Midland Place, at 7.00pm, or the Brunswick 8.00pm, or later at the Alexandra 9.00pm. **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May** sees a first photography walk and pub tour, details on page 4. There are further socials on the **20<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>** of the month, again, please see page 4. **Tap into Tutbury** is between the **14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May**. There's a host of **local pub beer festivals** which include the Furnace, Derby, and Railway, King Street, Belper. A little further afield, The Milking Parlour, Calke; Red Lion, Matlock Green; Barrow Hill Rail Ale and Hope Valley beer festivals will doubtless be destinations for some.



Furnace Inn, Duke Street, hosts its latest festival

## New Beginning for the Bab

The future of the 2005 Derby CAMRA City Pub of the Year, the Babington Arms, Babington Lane has been a topic of much speculation for some time after J D Wetherspoon announced its withdrawal from the city pub. M&B is pleased to report that Dave West and Darren Brett from Reading seek to continue its tradition of long opening hours and a broad range of changing real ales, accompanied by tasty food cooked on the premises, in good helpings. It's mooted that it will have large screens broadcasting sporting events, most notably the World Cup. Food will be served until 9.00pm and opening hours are Friday and Saturday 8.00am to 1.00am; Sunday to Thursday 8.00am to 11.00pm. Amber Ward is retained as manager together with certain other staff. When I called, Front Row and Falstaff breweries were to the fore and my pint cost less than £3. **Value for money is key here.**

## Queen's Vaults is Ashbourne Pub of the Season

The town centre pub on three levels is Ashbourne CAMRA's Spring Pub of the Season.

## Ashbourne and District CAMRA AGM is in May

Advance notice is given of the Ashbourne AGM at the Smith's Tavern in the town on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May at 8.00pm. If you're interested in standing for committee, please email the address on page 4.

## CAMRA Meetings

**Derby:** Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, Alexandra, Siddals Road, Derby – 8.00pm.

**Amber Valley:** Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May, Groovers, Peasehill, Ripley – 8.00pm.

**Ashbourne:** Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April at the Old Dog, Spend Lane, Thorpe - 8.00pm.

Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May **AGM** at the Smith's Tavern, Ashbourne.

## Heritage Fest Moves to Magnificent Market Hall

The third Heritage Beer and Cider Festival will be held at Derby's expensively restored Market Hall between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October. We'd like to thank all of the staff at the Museum of Making for their assistance in hosting the first two festivals, but circumstances preclude a third festival at the riverside venue.

## CAMRA Members' Weekend, April 2026

This one was the best that I have attended.

CAMRA seems to be finding its campaigning legs again, St Albans is an attractive city, we enjoyed many great pubs and pub beer festivals, and Derby CAMRA got two commendations.

All organizations need a good leader. In Ash Corbett-Collins we have an excellent one. This was his second AGM and Conference and it was evident that he is inspiring the National Executive and other leaders to reinvigorate and refocus the campaign. There was a buzz in the hall with lively good-natured discussion, sprinkled with humour.

I can't do justice here to the seven and a half hours of presentation and discussion. However, I and I'm sure the other Derby members there, will be happy to give more details at future meetings and socials. In the meantime, some key points:

- 1) CAMRA will survive the GBBF losses, but sadly there have been staff redundancies. Tight financial control will be essential to rebuild capital reserves without which GBBF or a Winter Beer Festival cannot be risked.
- 2) Regional festivals might be possible; the Derby (Market Place and Roundhouse) Beer Festivals were cited as excellent examples of what can be achieved.
- 3) Membership subscriptions now provide 77% of the income available for campaigning. Beer festival income is declining, but beer festivals are vital as the real ale shop window and the biggest source of new members.
- 4) Recruitment of new members and getting them involved are key aims. For every CAMRA member there are about 50 non-member real ale drinkers. Increasing percentages of them are women and Gen Z [based on my AI search].
- 5) The greatest threats to real ale are the stranglehold of the global breweries, deceptive and anti-competitive practices, and pub closures. These can only be countered at government level. Derby CAMRA was commended for its (Alan Pickersgill's) initiatives with our local MPs; we now expect a Parliamentary debate on real ale.
- 6) The new CAMRA strategy will be focussed on the key issues, be more agile and proactive, and will centre on empowering and supporting branches.
- 7) The days of the old-style bruisers who could sway conference decision by self-confidence and oratory, rather than knowledge and logic, are almost gone. It was notable that younger members and women of all ages are now coming to the fore in shaping the future of the campaign.

Details of the above and the many other initiatives and developments discussed should appear on the CAMRA website. **Tim Williams**

### Beer Festivals

**30<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May:** Star, Beeston, has circa one hundred beers at its beer festival.

**1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> May:** Sheffield Students' Union – 3 locations.

**1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> May:** Hope Valley beer festival at the Old Hall Hotel, Hope. 173 and 272 buses call close-by and Hope railway station is a short hop away.

**14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May:** Rail Ale, Barrow Hill Beer Festival.

**20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May:** Furnace Inn, Duke Street, Derby. Live music and street food on Friday and Saturday. 30 real ales, 12 craft kegs and 10 real ciders.

**21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May:** Lincoln Beer Festival. Direct trains from Derby to Lincoln.

**22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May:** Milking Parlour, Tollgate Brewery Tap, Staunton Lane, Calke LE65 1RG. 25+ real ales from all over the UK, live music, BBQ and more.

**22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May:** Hope Valley beer festival at the Old Hall Hotel, Hope. 173 and 272 buses call close-by and Hope railway station is a short hop away.

**23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May:** Railway, King Street, Belper. Beer and cider festival plus live music in the large garden.

**29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May:** Red Lion, Matlock Green. X17 bus stops close-by.

**11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June:** The Old Dog, Spend Lane, Thorpe DE6 2AT. 30 cask ales with live music all weekend, festival food options and it's family friendly.

**12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June:** Craft beers, wines and spirits Festival, Market Hall, Derby between 1.00pm and 10.00pm.

**24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June:** White Hart, Bargate.

**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sun 5<sup>th</sup> July- The Eyes Have It Music festival,** Duffield. There's a real ale & cider marquee.

**27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August:** Ashbourne CAMRA beer and cider festival at the Town Hall.

**12<sup>th</sup> September:** Derby Pride, Markeaton Park. Gareth Gates will be headlining.

**2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October:** Craft beers, wines and spirits Festival, Market Hall, Derby between 1.00pm and 10.00pm.

**14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> October:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Heritage Beer and Cider Festival at Derby's Market Hall.

**Don't forget, as a member you have free admission to all CAMRA Beer Festivals.**

### Micro Pub to Host Mini Beer Festival

The Victoria and Albert Vaults on the corner of Mackworth Road and Watson Street, is planning to hold a small beer festival at the end of May.

### Inn Brief

Jane Macmanaman, the successful licensee of the **Green Man**, Willington, is retiring this summer. **The Horse and Groom**, Elm Street, has new management after the existing lease expired. The **Royal Telegraph**, London Road, opposite Marks and Spencer's, also has new management. Devotees of Thornbridge brewery may be interested to know that the Bakewell based operation has opened its fifth pub, **The Wild Swan**, 99 Fetter Lane, London. Recently, **The Broadway** had a collaboration stout brewed by Taylor's of Keighley and Northern Monk; Draught Bass, and Stewarts 80/- described in the Good Beer Guide as Edinburgh's original craft brewery.

### Little Eaton Brewery Lands Large Order

Black Hole brewer, Andy, and brewery boss, Carl Haspell, have negotiated with the Watford based pub company, J D Wetherspoon, to supply 702 9-gallon casks of Supernova, a 4.8% brew described in the Good Beer Guide as "pure gold". Indeed, it's such a large order that the casks have had to be hired. This is a big boost for the Little Eaton outfit, whose wares you can sample at Mr Grundy's, Ashbourne Road, Derby.



Mr Grundy's

### Derby Pubs Reopen Following Expensive Refits

**The Lodge**, corner of Shardlow Road/Grange Road, Alvaston, run by Salih Yagci, has reopened with an emphasis on large TV screens showing Sky Sports and TNT Sports in this Flaming Grill pub. A fulsome menu and real ale sate the appetite of customers in a true community Local. At the opposite side of the city, the **Jonty Farmer**, Kedleston Road, has also reopened with a similar theme and serves Pedigree, Hobgoblin and Wainwright Gold. I'm sure both pubs will be looking to capitalise on the imminent men's football World Cup and the women's World Cup in Brazil next year, especially after the Lionesses beat world champions, Spain, recently.

### Latest From The Boot, Repton

Steve Copestake reports that Boot and Clod brewed by Little are available together with Draught Bass, or Tiger from Everard's. Recently, Rame Bitter from Birch Cottage featured, and RBA from Oakwood has been on the bar. Guests are increasingly coming from several smaller Derbyshire brewers and beer sales are increasing year on year.

### Handpump Hi-Jack Latest

An amendment to existing legislation is soon to be read in parliament which, if passed, will outlaw the serving of keg beers through handpumps. Indeed, in May, it's scheduled to be in the King's Speech. Derby CAMRA has blazed a trail in this campaign and it's still not too late to write to your MP supporting our campaign which we hope will see cask beer earning protected status.

It was heartening to hear that Alan Pickersgill, Derby CAMRA's publicity officer and licensee of the Brunswick, together with Derby South MP, Baggy Shanker, won commendations at the recent national AGM in St Albans for their work in bringing the Handpump Hi-Jack campaign to the fore.

### Tap into Tutbury

The annual extravaganza is between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May at Tutbury Cricket Club, Tutbury Bowls Club, Tutbury Club, The Courtyard, Willows, The Hour Glass, The Cross Keys, The Leopard, The New Inn and The Vine. Drink, food and entertainment are available throughout the event which is sponsored by Little Brewing Company of Derby.

### Burton Ale Trail

It's sponsored by Burton Bridge Brewery and runs from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> June. For more information go to [WWW.BURTONALETRAIL.COM](http://WWW.BURTONALETRAIL.COM)

### New Pub for Heanor?

Kerry Mapstone has made a planning application to Amber Valley Borough Council to open the Drunken Dog on Heanor Market Place.

### Ilkeston's Beer Offer is Excellent

Catching the fast and frequent Ilkeston Flyer from Derby bus station, I recently counted 34 unique beers in



11 pubs. All of the pubs were friendly, charging very reasonable prices, and I'll be returning this summer to sit in some of the lovely beer gardens.

### Derek Blackmore RIP

Derek's funeral was held in the Round Chapel, Markeaton Crematorium, on a beautifully sunny April day, and the celebrant delivered a lovely eulogy which gave an interesting insight into Derek's life. A good representation of members from Derby CAMRA's formative years was present, including Ian Forman, Nick Potter, Steve Foster, Dave George, Chris Gale, Shirley Gale, Tim Williams, Les Williams, Jeff Fletcher, Pat Greasley and Russell Gilbert. Afterwards, a nice buffet was provided in The Broadway, backed up by an interesting range of beers.

It is, though, sad to think that we'll never again hear the sound of laughter and conversation from Derek, his wife, Margaret, and their friend Ron Beddows. PG

### Membership Recruitment

We'd like to thank Gillian Hough, James Williams and Kevin Hepworth for their time taken on membership desks at the Brunswick and Victoria beer festivals in April. There will be a membership desk at the Rhythm and Brews Beestonia and Urban Chicken Weekender on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May in Ilkeston. If you'd like to help on a membership desk, please contact [Nic Scott secretary@derby.camra.org.uk](mailto:Nic.Scott@derby.camra.org.uk)

### New Wetherspoon Pubs set to Open

It isn't just Derby's Victoria and Albert Vaults that's bucking the trend of pub closures, as J D Wetherspoon is scheduled to open 15 new outlets in the UK by the end of the summer.

Five of these will be on Haven Holiday sites.

### Brewery Historian Publishes Book on "Big Six"

John Arguile has published "The Big Six" which recounts the formation, growth and demise of Britain's six largest breweries between 1955 and 2025. It looks at the key players involved and notable beers are recounted by employees. Priced at £9.90, you can obtain a copy from the Alexandra, Siddals Road, Derby and Poynton's in the Derbion shopping centre stock it too.

Alternatively, please send a cheque for £13.35 (including postage and packing) payable to Mr J Arguile to 71 Elms Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 6FB.

### Minutes of the Ashbourne & District CAMRA Meeting at the Queen's Vaults, Ashbourne on Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

#### Attendance:

Graham Burke (Chair), Mark Grist, Colin & Alison Terry, Bob Barker, Martin Sales, Beth Foster, Ian Jones, Konrad Machej, Stephen & Sue Asbury, Simon Ardron (Uttoxeter).

#### Apologies:

Diane Grist, Kevin Woolley, Hannah Barton, John Chamberlin, David O'Dell, Alan Shenton, Paul Jesson.

**Declaration of Interest:** Mark Grist – Smith's Tavern.

#### Minutes of previous meeting including accuracy/action:

The minutes were taken as read.

#### Chairman:

Reported on his attendance at recent Derby & Uttoxeter branch meetings; also confirmed presentations had taken place at The Red Lion, Kniveton; Parwich RBL and Smith's Tavern. Attended the county meeting at the Red Lion, Matlock and represented branch at Burton Beer Festival alongside other members. Reiterated the current National campaigns to include the business rates reforms; loss of pubs through amended planning regulations; the Pub Code and any possible reviews thereof and general threats to the continued well-being of pubs nationally.

#### Secretary:

Membership as of 2<sup>nd</sup> March – 72 (up 2). 4 nominations received for the Spring Pub of the Season. A vote confirmed **The Queen's Vaults** as the winner.

Following a short discussion, members agreed to recognize the welcome addition of The Hug & Heave to the town with a Rising Star certificate. Graham will arrange both presentations in the very near future.

**Cider:** No report.

**Pub News:** No firm new updates this month.

#### Beer Festival:

The festival is set to be flagged as the 10<sup>th</sup> edition, allowing for a couple of fallow years. The business plan has been centrally approved. The next planning meeting is due on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Social events:** Continuing to work closely with Uttoxeter branch on "exchange" socials. We will look at a visit to Uttoxeter Brewery in the near future.

#### Dates:

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April – branch meeting – Old Dog, Thorpe.

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May – branch AGM – Smith's Tavern.

**Derby Branch Diary**

**MAY**

**Fri 1st - Craft & Cask Social** between 7:30pm and 11:30pm. **Tiny Tap**, Unit 23, Northedge Business Park, Alfreton Rd, Darley Abbey, Derby DE21 4BN; **Little Chester Ale House; Furnace &** finishing at **Suds & Soda**. Contact James on 07510161151 to find where we are. Plan to spend about an hour in each pub so if joining later you should easily find us. Look out for the small blackboards on the tables or ask at the bar to find where we are.

**Tue 5<sup>th</sup> – Mild in May evening.** Celebrate the dark stuff by meeting in the Victoria, Midland Place, at 7.00pm, or the Brunswick 8.00pm, or later at the Alexandra 9.00pm.

**Thu 7<sup>th</sup> – Committee meeting** at the Pattenmakers, Crown Street, Duffield – 8.00pm.

**Sat 9<sup>th</sup> – Inaugural photography, walk and pub tour**  
Catch the 9.35am Transpeak from Derby bus station  
For the first Photography & Pub Tour Social. Aiming to be at Cromford Mills, Mill Rd, Cromford, Matlock DE4 3RQ for approximately 10.30am.

The photo challenge is to take up to 5 photos with either the theme of industry or/and the colour red. Any camera can be used, be it your smart phone or conventional camera and for novices and professionals.

**The winner will have a pint bought by the social secretary.**  
Meet up at 12.30 at the Boat Inn, off Cromford Market Place, or for those who are not interested or want to do some exploring of the town. Catch the 1.19pm X17 Gold to Wirksworth. first stop the Feather Star (Red Lion). Return on either the 5.14pm or 6.17pm TrentBarton 6.1 from outside the Red Lion back to Derby. Regular buses throughout the day for those wanting to leave at another time.

**Thu 14<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH MEETING**, Alexandra, Siddals Road, Derby – 8.00pm.

**Wed 20<sup>th</sup> – Mickleover Meander**

Starting at around 8.00pm in the Masons Arms, 1 Etwall Road, then on to the Nag's Head and finishing at the Hole in the Wall. Call 07510161151 to find where we are or look for the small blackboards with Derby CAMRA on, or ask at the bar. Frequent buses from Derby bus station.

**Fri 29<sup>th</sup> – Afternoon social** in the Last Post, 1 Uttoxeter Old Road, Derby – noon to 3.00pm.

**Amber Valley Diary**

**MAY**

**Tue 26<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH MEETING** at the Groovers, Peasehill, Ripley – 8.00pm.

**JUNE**

**Fri 5<sup>th</sup> - Sun 7<sup>th</sup> Belper Goes Green**, Branch is running the real ale and cider marquee.

**JULY**

**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sun 5<sup>th</sup> - The Eyes Have It Music festival**, Duffield, Branch is running the real ale & cider marquee.

**Amber Valley Contact**

*Chairman: Chris Rogers 01332 880041*

**Ashbourne Diary**

**APRIL**

**Tues 28<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH MEETING** at the Old Dog, Thorpe – 8.00pm.

**MAY**

**Tues 26<sup>th</sup> – BRANCH AGM** at the Smith's Tavern – 8.00pm.

**Ashbourne Contact**

*info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk*

**DERBY CONTACTS**

**COMMITTEE**

**Chair:** Mark Fletcher *chair@derby.camra.org.uk*

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**Treasurer:** Andrew Norman *treasurer@derby.camra.org.uk*

**Membership:** Gillian Hough  
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**Pubs Officer:** Kat Higgins  
*pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk*

**Ashbourne Chairman:** Graham Burke  
*info@ashbourne.camra.org.uk*

**Campaigns' Coordinator:** Alan Pickersgill  
*campaigns@derby.camra.org.uk*

**Cider and Perry Officer:** Post vacant.

**Socials:** James Williams *socials@derby.camra.org.uk*

**Press and publicity:** Alan Pickersgill  
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**Derby Drinker:** *derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk*

**Beer Festival:** Russell Gilbert  
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**Advisory role:** Kevin Hepworth

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**Derby CAMRA Tasting Panel Chair:** Les Williams  
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**M&B Copy Deadline**

Copy to  
*mildbitter@derby.camra.org.uk* by  
**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May**

**Derby Drinker Deadline**

**5<sup>th</sup> May**

*derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk*

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