



Issue 201

May/June
2023

DERBY rinker

FREE



Cheers

Covering Derby, Ashbourne, Amber Valley, Erewash, Matlock & Uttoxeter CAMRA Areas

BRANCH AWARDS 2023



City & Branch Pub of the Year -
Falstaff, Derby.

DERBY
CAMRA



Country Pub of the Year -
Spirit Vaults, Melbourne.



Cider & Perry Pub of the Year - Brunswick Inn, Derby.



Winter Ale Trail
Winner - Victoria Inn,
Derby.



Club of the Year - Jubilee Club, Chaddesden, Derby.

Full details inside plus all the usual features
and events.



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



DERBY CAMRA Pubs of the Year 2023

The Derby Branch of CAMRA has selected its Pubs of the Year for 2023: -

The **City Pub of the Year** is the **Falstaff** on Silver Hill Road in Normanton beating finalists the Furnace Inn and the Smithfield Alehouse to the title. The **Country Pub of the Year** is the **Spirit Vaults** in Melbourne beating finalists the Royal Oak in Ockbrook and the Spread Eagle in Etwell to the title. And by virtue of having the highest overall mark the **Falstaff** has been crowned **Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year 2023**.



Landlord Jim with the Winning Certificates



Jim & Steph celebrate with the Mayor

This year marks 20 years at the Falstaff for licensees, Jim Hallows and Steph Briggs so to win Derby CAMRA's prestigious Pub of the Year Award as well makes it an extra special year indeed.

The brewpub on the corner of Silver Hill Road and Society Place in the Normanton area of Derby was built in 1886 and Jim & Steph have put the heart and sole into the place over those 20 years restoring the different rooms and exposing many original features in the process. The Offiler's lounge in particular is a joy to behold, a veritable shrine to the former brewery which stood a couple of hundred yards away but closed in 1966. It houses an amazing collection of their memorabilia which is continually being added too and the room also features a roaring open fire during the winter months making it very cosy and atmospheric. The adjoining brewhouse has also been rebuilt and rewired in that time and a selection of Falstaff beers can be found on the bar as well as in other places in the free trade. All of which has helped the pub

become a perennially Good Beer Guide entry having now been in every issue since 1999.

Congratulations then to Jim & Steph on winning Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year in their 20th year and for the first time too which definitely deserved a visit from the Mayor of Derby who dropped by to help them celebrate. The Falstaff will now go forward into the Derbyshire South round where it will compete with pub winners from Ashbourne, Amber Valley and South Derbyshire.

Out in the Country the **Spirit Vaults** in Melbourne takes the honours for the very first time. The pub, formally the Blue Bell re-opened in 2020 after a huge 18-month renovation which included the installation of a brand-new microbrewery, five en-suite guest rooms on the first and second floors and a complete redesign of the downstairs layout to include 2 rooms either side of a central bar with a further room to the rear. Many original features have been revealed or

restored during the refurbishment with lots of beams on show and there is some interesting & informative decor all around the pub showing how beer is made, etc. The pub also has a pleasant outside heated patio at the side which will be a lovely spot in summer, and it's well located for visitors to the Melbourne Hall and Norman parish church (12th century) nearby. The onsite microbrewery known as 'Morgan Brewmasters' is positioned in the heart of the pub and on display for all to see while supping a beer or two made on that very plant. The Award is in fact a double celebration for the pub having recently made the Good Beer Guide and congratulations must go to all the team involved at the Spirit Vaults for making this happen. To get there catch the Arriva No.2/2a bus route which runs from Derby to Swadlincote every day.

The winners and runners-up have now all received their certificates from Pubs Officer, Mark Fletcher and a selection of photos is featured here.



Spirit Vaults



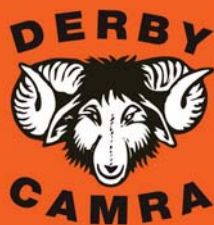
Furnace Inn



Spread Eagle



Royal Oak



Derby CAMRA Branch

DERBY CAMRA Cider & Perry Pub of the Year 2023

The Derby Branch of CAMRA **Cider & Perry Pub of the Year** for 2023 is once again the **Brunswick Inn** on Station Approach in Derby beating newcomer, the **Victoria Inn** on Midland Place in Derby to the title.

The Brunswick of course has won this award on many previous occasions and indeed was judged the best pub in the UK for Cider in the National 2019 Great British Pub Awards. It stocks a fantastic range of ciders and perries and is a must visit place for all lovers of the drink. Congratulations then to licensees, Alan Pickersgill & Philippe Larroche and the Team who were presented with the award by Gillian Hough, Derby CAMRA's Cider & Perry Officer (See Photo).

A special mention must go to the Vic for achieving runner-up status after not being open that long and the photo shows landlord John Smith receiving the award from CAMRA Derbyshire South Area Organiser, Gareth Stead.



Brunswick

DERBY CAMRA Club of the Year 2023

The Derby Branch of CAMRA has selected its **Club of the Year** for 2023 with the **Jubilee Club** in Chaddesden taking the honours for the second year on the run. Several Clubs throughout the area were visited but in a keenly fought contest the Jubilee came out on top beating finalists the Victory Club in Allenton and the Liberal Club in Spondon to the title. The Club serves a selection of Real Ales and is reached from Derby on the Black Cat bus service which stops nearby. Congratulations then to all involved at the Jubilee Club for taking the title once again (see photo).



Jubilee Club

Derby CAMRA Winter Ale Trail Best Pubs 2023

The Derby Branch of CAMRA **Winter Ale Trail Best Pub** has been awarded to the **Victoria Inn** on Midland Place in Derby beating the **Smithfield Alehouse** to the title. Unlike the other awards this one is voted for by drinkers on the Ale Trail whether they are CAMRA Members or not so to win it is seen as quite prestigious indeed and for the Vic to win it after not being open that long is certainly some achievement. Congratulations to both pubs then and the winner and runner-up photos are featured here.



Victoria Inn



Smithfield

Upcoming Local CAMRA & Related Beer Festivals

6-8 May - Beer, Bats & Balls Bar - Belper Meadows Cricket Club.

18-20 May - Rail Ale - Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

25-27 May - Lincoln Beer Festival - The Drill Hall.

26-28 May - Newark Beer Festival - Castle Grounds.

22-25 June - Rutland Beer Festival - Rutland County Museum, Oakham.

Derby CAMRA



Website - www.derby.camra.org.uk

Facebook - DerbyCAMRA

Twitter - @DerbyCAMRA

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Young Members Officer - YMG@derby.camra.org.uk

Derby CAMRA Branch Diary

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials, meetings and trips.

Here is a list of forthcoming events:

MAY

Fri 5th - Dead Poets Beer Fest Social, Holbrook - 8pm.

Wed 10th - Cider POTY - Brunswick, Derby - 8pm.

Thu 11th - Branch Meeting - Derby Brewing Tap House - 8pm.

Thu 18th - POTY Presentation - Falstaff, Derby - 7.30pm.

Tue 23rd - Mild Month Social - Smithfield, Derby - 8pm.

Fri 26th - Little Chester Ale House & Furnace Beer Fest Social - 8pm.

JUNE

Sat 3rd - Shardlow Survey - 12 Noon.

Thu 8th - Branch Meeting - Malt Shovel, Spondon - 8pm.

Sat 17th - Tamworth Social - 12 Noon.

JULY

Wed 12th - Branch Meeting - Greyhound, Derby - 8pm.

Contact the Social Secretary, by email - socials@derby.camra.org.uk
(Check www.derby.camra.org.uk for all upcoming events)

SUMMER OF PUB

CAMRA is running a campaign to get people back to the pub. We believe pubs are an integral part of our communities and want to help them flourish.

As part of the campaign, we will provide free advertising and promotional materials to pubs hosting celebratory events during the summer months. This could include anything from live music and beer festivals to quiz and open mic nights.

To find out more about the campaign, view/add events and order your free materials, please visit our website: <https://camra.org.uk/pubs-and-clubs/current-campaigns/summer-of-pub/>

Derby CAMRA will be looking to put on local events to support pubs if you would like to volunteer contact us at: socials@derby.camra.org.uk



THE RED LION AT KNIVETON

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CIDER & PERRY FESTIVAL

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Ashbourne & District CAMRA
Cider Pub Of The Year 2022, 2023
Pub Of The Year - Highly Commended 2023

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PUB BEER FESTIVAL

BRUNSWICK
SUMMER BEER &
CIDER FESTIVAL

40 CASK ALES & 20 REAL
CIDERS & PERRIES
JULY 5TH - 9TH 2023

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& PERRY PUB OF THE
YEAR 2023

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En-suite Accommodation



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www.alexandrahotelderby.co.uk



Ashbourne & District CAMRA Branch

Contact Mark Grist m.grist2@sky.com

Ashbourne Beer Festival

It is with great regret that the organizing committee of the CAMRA Ashbourne Beer & Cider Festival has collectively agreed to cancel the next planned festival due in September 2023. Despite a successful return last year after two years of Covid postponements, and subsequent high hopes for future festivals, a combination of withdrawals from the committee, doubts over the continued viability of the usual venue and more general difficulties in putting on local CAMRA beer festivals have meant that time and specifically manpower are in too short supply to be able to get this year's event running. We will continue to explore options for 2024 and hope that other local festivals, such as Amber Valley and Derby, may also find ways to reboot their respective festivals, so that we can all offer that great beer experience once again.

Pub News

The **Green Man** is under new management as of late March and we wish them well on the relaunch.

The **Nag's Head, Hulland Ward**, is now fully open again, with early favourable reports.

The **Red Lion, Hollington**, is now in the full ownership of the occupying tenant and continues to do very well.

Branch Award Presentations

We recently had the pleasure of presenting this year's Branch Awards (see photos). The **Smith's Tavern** in Ashbourne was crowned **Branch Pub of the Year**, the **Red Lion** in Kniveton received **Cider Pub of the Year** while the **Queens Vaults** was awarded **Best Pub on the Winter Ale Trail**. Congratulations to all the Winners.



George and Walter have now fully handed over the **Queen's Vaults in Ashbourne** to Kerry Edwards and the pub was also presented with a certificate on 30th March for winning the Ashbourne section of the Winter Ale Trail. Congratulations to all parties and our best wishes to George and Walter for the future.

A new cafe/bar venue under the **BEAR** brand is close to opening in Ashbourne, so we'll aim to report on it next time around.

We have heard that both the **Horns** and the former **Natwest Bank** in Ashbourne, now under the same ownership, are lined up to reopen in the coming months, with the bank being repurposed to a hospitality venue. Any firm news will be reported in the next edition.

Diary Dates

(subject to changes)

Tuesday 30th May

AGM - Smith's Tavern, Ashbourne - 8pm.

Tuesday 27th June

Branch Meeting - Red Lion, Hollington - 8pm.

Tuesday 25th July

Branch Meeting - TBC - 8pm.



Smithfest

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EREWASH VALLEY CAMRA BRANCH

Contact Roger Steele
rsteale1977@gmail.com

EREWASH VALLEY CAMRA REPORT

We're back!

As announced in Issue 199 of Derby Drinker, the Erewash Valley branch has returned after an eighteen month hiatus. Of the branch members who stepped forward to fill the key committee posts, some have no previous experience in a CAMRA committee role, but there others in the team with a wealth of experience and keen to help the newbies! So if you would like to help keep the branch afloat, there are other committee posts to be filled. Do contact us via social media (details below) or by email to

secretary@erewash.camra.org.uk. You will be made most welcome!

We had our first branch meeting of the year on 22nd February at the Mill & Brook, Long Eaton. It was great to see so many members support the meeting. Our thanks go to Ashley, the new landlord at the Mill & Brook, for hosting our meeting.

Our next branch meeting will be on Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 19:30 at the Burnt Pig, Ilkeston. We hope to see you there!

What have we been doing?

One of our first tasks since reforming has been the selection of the pubs for the 2024 Good Beer Guide. Reviewing existing pub data and researching the history of some of the pubs and micropubs in the area has been a fascinating and interesting task for the new Pub Data Coordinator! From the Dew Drop Inn, which appears in CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors, to the York Chambers, a micropub housed in a former bank of a most unusual and unique architectural design, we really do have some terrific places in the Erewash Valley area to enjoy a well-kept pint.

Socials

We are planning a trip to Kidderminster in September. For those unfamiliar with the town, there is a wealth of real ale pubs within a short walk of the railway station – in the past the Wyre Forest CAMRA branch produced a real ale trail leaflet and map! Kidderminster is, of course, the terminus of the Severn Valley Railway. More details to follow, but in the meantime let us know (please email secretary@erewash.camra.org.uk) if you are interested, and we will keep you informed.

Reaching out

We are keen that information and news on beer festivals, events, pubs and breweries is

shared with the wider community. Does your local have a particularly unusual or interesting beer or real cider on tap at the moment? Spread the word. Follow us on social media, and tell us what is happening in your area:

Facebook: ErewashValleyCamraBranch

Twitter: @EVCAMRA

Website: erewash.camra.org.uk

The Eight Branches Winter Ale Trail 2023

January and February saw the return of the Winter Ale Trail. This year, eight branches in the area took part: Amber Valley, Ashbourne, Derby, Erewash Valley, Mansfield and Ashfield were joined for the first time by the Matlock and Dales, Nottingham and Uttoxeter branches.

For those unfamiliar with this annual event, the Winter Ale Trail involves pub-goers visiting the pubs on the trail (using a "trail card" published in the January/February issue of Derby Drinker), drinking a pint or half in each pub, and then obtaining a sticker from the bar staff to put on the trail card. Thirty or more stickers entitle the drinker to a reward at a forthcoming Derby, Amber Valley or Ashbourne CAMRA Beer Festival, and drinkers who have the most stickers on their trail card will receive a certificate. Votes are taken for the two best pubs on the trail in each branch area.

This year, seventeen pubs in the Erewash Valley took part, and well-earned congratulations go to the Bunny Hop at Langley Mill (pictured below left), which was voted Best Pub in the Erewash Valley branch area, and to the Burnt Pig, Ilkeston, as runner up (pictured below right).



PUB NEWS

Navigation Inn, Risley Lane, Breaston

We were recently contacted by Gary Bailey who, since April last year, has taken over running the Navigation Inn. On our visit, it

was clear that the new licensees have made considerable efforts to extend the number of real ales on the bar – up to six are now available, on rotation, primarily from local breweries, but also from small independents and microbreweries from around the country (including Sambrooks of Wandsworth on the day of our visit). They have also re-introduced CAMRA discount.

It was pleasing to see how busy the pub was for a weekday evening, and we wish Gary and the team every success over the coming months and years.

Mill & Brook, Derby Road, Long Eaton

It is fair to say that there has been some concern over the last few years since the "Lease this Pub" sign first appeared outside the Mill & Brook. Formerly the Harrington Arms, the pub is located adjacent to the impressive Harrington Mill, a historic Victorian tenement lace factory. It is easily reached from the neighbouring Erewash Canal and Erewash Valley Trail. In January, it was with both jubilation and relief that we learnt that not only had a new licensee been found, but the lease had been taken by Lincoln Green Brewery. The Mill & Brook became Lincoln Green's sixth pub.

As well as serving beers from their extensive catalogue, there is usually one beer from independent breweries near and far. Furthermore, there is an excellent menu of bar snacks available throughout the day. It has been fantastic to see the Mill & Brook return to the fold of appealing real ale pubs in Long Eaton.

WhatPub?

Did you know that beer scoring is key evidence for a pub's entry into the Good Beer Guide? All CAMRA members can help monitor beer quality in pubs using CAMRA's WhatPub app, which is downloadable to a computer or smartphone. On each visit to a pub, the user is able to score the quality of the beer on a scale of 0 to 5. The data collected over the weeks and months provides the local branch a means of monitoring how well that pub has been looking after its beer. So, if you haven't done so already, we would encourage all CAMRA members to install WhatPub on your device, and next time you visit the pub, submit a beer score or two.

Diary

Wednesday 24 May - Branch Meeting - Burnt Pig, Ilkeston - 7.30pm.

Trevor Harris and Derby B

Trevor was brought up in Leacroft Road near the Baseball Ground, and was an alumni of Derby Grammar School, St. Helen's House. Completion of his education enabled him to work at Severn Trent Water, Prestige, and at Qualcast as a work study engineer in the lawn mower division.

Trevor's gregarious persona led to itchy feet, however, and he found the prospect of running a pub enticing. Thus, in 1981, Trevor took on the Bridge Inn, Michaelchurch, in the beautiful countryside of Herefordshire, just 9 miles from the tourist hotspot of Hay on Wye. This was followed by running the Bull's Head, Repton, in 1983, before a move to the Vine, Mickleover, where his tenancy ended in 1987. It's worth noting that Trevor served the renowned Ind Coope Draught Burton Ale at both pubs.

At Derby Grammar School, Trevor had formed a friendship with John Evans and the pair combined to great effect in the mid 1980s when they paid a nominal sum for the **Brunswick Inn** which had lain empty for a decade. The licensing of the Brunswick was far from simple, however, and Derby pubs historian, John Arguile, takes up the story: "Michael Mallender, a senior partner in solicitors Taylor, Simpson and Mosley, and a leading light in the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust, was at the centre of protracted legal wrangling, which saw owners, Hardy and Hanson, reluctant to cede the licence as the Kimberley brewing company intended to transfer it to a new pub. Michael, together with Derby North MP, Greg Knight, and the late Ivor Clissold, Derby CAMRA's pub preservation officer, fought a legal battle which saw the case reach the House of Lords and the High Court. Ultimately, Michael held the licence for five years until it passed to Trevor Harris who, with John Evans, opened the Brunswick to universal laudation in October 1987." Michael sadly passed away in 2016, and these days licensing applications are much simpler.

A brewhouse was added in 1991, but Trevor and John were to go their separate ways and the acclaimed Brunswick was sold to Everard's brewery (Leicester) in 2002. Having made his mark, there was little chance of Trevor standing still and he duly formed Derby Brewing Company in 2004 with his first beers leaving the former Mason's Paintworks Varnish Shed, Nottingham Road, in October of that year. In 2008, at a time of considerable expansion, Trevor enlisted his son, Paul, who was product manager for Gaymer Cider, and today Paul is managing director of Derby Brewing, as it's known now. John Evans sadly died in that same year, but not before being successful in his own right, reopening the reimagined Flowerpot, aided by Lol Stephenson in 1993, and later that decade, acquiring the Smithfield.

By 2012, no fewer than 400 outlets were being supplied including DBC's own pubs: the former Royal Standard, renamed **The Tap** on Derwent Street, the **Greyhound** on Friar Gate; and the **Queen's Head** in Little Eaton, which was a joint venture with Everard's under the

Project William scheme. The first two continue to thrive but the latter has been divested by DBC. Our photograph of the Greyhound is from the 1970s when Ray Gilbert ran it, in the days when the Bass house had considerably less public space.

In 2015, the Georgian **Kedleston Hotel**, designed by Robert Adam, opened, having been restored in an ambitious million-pound plus project in collaboration with the Curzon family, but Derby Brewing withdrew from the project after a while.

In 2017 a successful share launch raised a significant sum.



In 2019, **The Pig Inn** on Tamworth Street in the cathedral city of Lichfield became Derby Brewing's first acquisition outside Derbyshire. Behind an attractive façade is a pared-back classic interior with abundant grey wall panelling, beneath which sit deep-buttoned banquettes. A black frieze-rail frames the central bar servery, and outside at the back is a patio for fair weather drinking.

Nearer to Derby but still in Staffordshire, in the heart of the pretty village of Barton-Under-Needwood, sits the **Middle Bell** which recently served the best pint of the day, namely Dashingly Dark, at just £3.45 a pint. Low ceilinged, beamed and rambling inside, this is clearly an inn of some antiquity, although the real attraction is a clutch of small rooms, one with an inglenook fireplace. A full roster of events nearly every night of the week and outside drinking areas ensure the pub's popularity.



Brewing; The Story So Far

The **Hole in the Wall** in the former NatWest bank on Station Road, Mickleover, opened on 12th March 2020. Compact and comfortable with a cross beamed ceiling from which hops hang, half a dozen handpulled Derby beers are augmented by a mouth-watering choice of continental bottled beers and craft keg. In clement weather you can sit outside. Shortly after opening, a pandemic induced lockdown ensued and the Hole became effectively a busy off-licence with Mickleover residents warming to this enterprise. Trevor later acknowledged the government's role in facilitating the survival of his business through Covid related financial aid.

The **Pointing Dogs**, 5 Dale Road, Matlock, opened in October 2022 with the high-ceilinged banking hall having a mezzanine floor constructed. Styled in contemporary chic, the rear restaurant on the upper floor enjoys a birds-eye view of Matlock bridge and a riverside terrace is bound to be busy in summer. Business as Usual has three changing brews vying alongside it from the Nottingham Road brewery for attention. Pointing Dogs is a notable addition to the Matlock pub scene that has seen a high degree of innovation in the past decade.



The Pointing Dogs

On the corner of Friar Gate and Ford Street, Derby, stands the **Club House** with 16 TV screens, shuffleboard, beer pong and inter-active darts for entertainment. Its deep and commodious interior is essentially industrial chic but a front room is more sumptuous in style. A mezzanine floor overlooks the hubbub of the bar area serving Derby beers.

At the beginning of March, **Notsa**, Derby Road, Aston-on-Trent, became the latest venue for forward-looking Derby Brewing and it's best described as a hybrid café, deli, shop and bar. It's open from early to late and is part of a multi-business on-site enterprise in collaboration with Rob Bell. Notsa is an anagram of Aston and recalls the name of a well-known engineering company once based here. Inside, a high vaulted ceiling incorporates a mezzanine floor and the retention of features such as steel cross beams and exposed brickwork lend authenticity and atmosphere. A quartet of Derby Brewing beers are available on draught but this place ticks a lot of boxes and has broader appeal in affluent Aston-on-Trent.

Derby brew a core of beers supplemented by one-offs, and it's worth noting that card carrying CAMRA members receive 20p a pint discount at all eight venues. With the exception of the Hole in Wall, all of the hostelryes have formal food menus and it's fair to say that,



Club House

locally, no individual has done more for the brewing and pub trade than Trevor Harris over the past forty years.

Paul Gibson



Notsa



Trevor Harris & Kes

Three Cheers for the Prince of Wales

Derby Drinker couldn't let the occasion of the Coronation pass without at least a fleeting acknowledgement. The Prince of Wales, Chapel Street, Spondon, fitted the bill and the unheralded Ilkeston Flyer was our mode of transport.

The original Prince of Wales occupied the shop premises extant on the corner of Gladstone Road and Chapel Street before the new Prince was built in the Edwardian era on the corner of Oxford Street. It's been run by Dave Bennett since September 2022, and entering through

the corner door a quartet of hand-pulled ales upon a traditional bar included Purity Ubu, Dancing Duck Ay Up, Little(over) King George and Doom Bar. There's a comfortably furnished lounge with mainly green décor and a separate, tiled bar with deep buttoned banquette seating. A busy roster of weekly events is in evidence including Thursday – live music, Friday – Karaoke, Sunday – games night. Further entertainment comes in the form of screened football, courtesy of Sky and BT and, for the peckish, snacks are available. Card carrying CAMRA

members get 15p a pint discount and outside seating is provided beneath The Loft which is available for hire.

Rams fans resident in Spondon can relieve themselves of the A52 match day congestion by catching a supporters' bus from the Prince. Of course, the corner house is just one of a clutch of good pubs in Spondon: the Vernon, White Swan, the classic Malt Shovel, and in more recent times, the Hoptimist, make the village a destination in its own right.

Paul Gibson



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General

The main event in recent weeks was the hugely successful visit to Lichfield on 11th March. Fifty people attended and had a great time. The Horse and Jockey, Beerbohm, Whippet, BitterSuite and Trinity Tap were among the favorites.

So successful was the day that three more coach trips are planned for later in the year, plus a further half dozen via public transport (see below). This will have included a visit to Sheffield on 22nd April for the CAMRA members weekend Conference and AGM. We acknowledge the need to try and attract more younger members.

Monthly meetings continue to be well supported with eighteen members in attendance at the Horse and Dove for the latest one. At this meeting members identified the short list for POTY. Visits are to be arranged by Andy Ockleton to identify the overall winner. Likewise for the Cider POTY and Club of the Year. Attendees were once again encouraged to mark pubs/beers on the CAMRA app. One mark a week from the attendees would give us 1000 bits of feedback on which to base our awards. Heart of Staffordshire Branch is organizing a beer festival and volunteers will be required to serve at the bars. Dates to follow.

The Night Inn was voted Uttoxeter's top pub by the visitors on the Winter Ale Trail. The presentation of a certificate was made by branch chairman Simon Ardron to Rachel Mackinson on 25th March (photo below).



Since the last edition we have learnt of the sad death of Steve 'Lank' Lavin. Lank was a printer extraordinaire and Bass connoisseur. He arranged many 'Let Fly's' to real ale hotspots such as the Black Country, the Peak District and the North Staffs/South Cheshire area. The nickname, Lank, originated from when he was just tall and before he consumed approximately 100,000 pints of Bass! He will be sadly missed. RIP Lank

Sadly we have also learnt that the Bull at Marchington has been sold and is once more closed. Let's hope it's been purchased by someone who wants to turn it back into a pub. I am not holding my breath.

Meetings:

- 1st May** – Branch Meeting and AGM - the Night Inn
- 12th June** – Branch Meeting – Shrewsbury Arms, Kingstone
- 10th July** – Branch Meeting - The Black Swan
(Then every second Monday of the month)

Socials:

- 20 May** - Leek, by coach
- 27 May** - Newark Beer Festival, by train
- 8 July** - Checkley/Teian, by service bus
- 22 July** - Buxton, by coach
- 23 September** - Tamworth, by coach
- 21 October** - Newcastle-under-Lyme, possibly by coach
- 11 November** - Nelson Gin Distillery, £20pp + minibuses

Awards

The Horse and Dove was awarded POTS for the Spring season.

The White Hart was awarded the Winter Rising Star

Uttoxeter Brewing Company

The Uttoxeter Brewing Company (UBC) has launched a new beer. Ricky's Ox Dropper was brewed at the Carter Street brewery for the first time in January of this year. The ale is named after heavyweight boxer Ricky Gorman, who turned professional last year and won his debut fight against Bulgarian Champion, Milen Paunov, in October.

Ricky is the nephew of legendary local figure Bartley Gorman and follows in his uncle's footsteps, not only by getting into boxing, but also having a UBC beer named after him. Bartley Bitter has been a favourite of local imbibers for the last three years. Ox Dropper references Ricky's devastating right hand cross, and needless to say that Ricky's Ox Dropper is inclined to knock you about a bit if not taken in moderation!

Ricky is sponsored by UBC and popped down to Uttoxeter to help with the brewing process. The ale is a 5% abv NZ hopped amber ale which has been extremely well received by local drinkers. Ricky also dropped in at the Night Inn (the UBC taphouse) recently to help with dispensing the beer to thirsty customers.

Following the initial success of the new beer a second batch will be brewed in April and will be on sale in numerous outlets at the time of this publication. Keep an eye on Real Ale Finder to see where it is available. Andy and Tom at the brewery are delighted with the success of the new beer. Andy told us, "We were chuffed when Ricky approached us with the idea for his own beer to match up with Bartley's. We decided together to get a stronger brew out there to match the strength of the man himself. It gave us the chance to work with some New Zealand hops that we'd not used before as well, so everyone's a winner!"



Andy the pensive brewer with Jasmine and certificate.

The UBC tap at the top of the White Hart yard in Carter Street will be open for business on Friday, Saturday and Sunday lunchtimes now that we are in British summer time. Check Facebook, etc, for opening times as the outside-only venue is weather dependent.

Footnote: there may yet be a Coronation Ale. Keep an eye on social media and Real Ale Finder for updates!

The Horse and Dove

Following a lengthy discussion, proprietor John Gregory and Graham Shenton agreed that The Horse and Dove was probably Uttoxeter's one and only micro-pub. It is certainly independent and sells an abundance of real ale and a range of ciders. It also used to be something other than a pub, in this case a dry cleaner's, a feature of many micros in our experience.



Horse and Dove with proprietor John Gregory in the foreground.

John started the process of taking over the Horse and Dove in February of last year when he shadowed the previous owners prior to taking full control on 1st May 2022. The bar has been open for approximately five years and has operated on similar lines since the beginning. John's previous experiences include operating a vintage beer bus. There is an irony here as those who know Uttoxeter's heritage will be aware that during the 50's and 60's the area outside the H&D was effectively the local bus station.

John is keen to make the H&D a social hub and the bar's pavement licence will enable drinks to be enjoyed outdoors during the better weather. The intention is to provide a range of quality real ales in town dominated in the past by Bass (not that that was a bad thing – but variety is after all the spice of life). The current strategy is to provide Butty Bach and Leatherbritches Citra as the two recurring ales with at least two guest ales sitting alongside. A recent addition is Galway Hooker which is now the house Stout. There is usually a good selection of ciders with four available at the moment including Yoxall Dark Fruit.

Later in the year we can look forward to acoustic music sessions, a Bristol Beer Factory tap takeover and the possibility of a customer loyalty card. John is keen that new customers give the H&D a try. Beers and opening times can be found on Real Ale Finder which John updates every day without fail.

The Horse and Dove can be found in Uttoxeter High Street just behind the Dr Johnson memorial. For old timers it used to be Sketchley's dry cleaners!!

Inn Focus: Cooper's Arms, Weston on Trent



When Weston Hall was built in the 17th century, the owner, Anthony Roper, allegedly ran out of money and consequently it never reached its intended size. Parliamentary soldiers were billeted here during the English Civil War.

By 1942 Weston Hall entered the Cooper family and in the 1980s Tom Cooper was the owner and resident of Weston Hall after inheriting it from his father. In the latter years of that decade, the contractors constructing the M42 quarried 250,000 tons of gravel from the hall's grounds and Tom had the brainchild of converting part of the place to a pub come restaurant. Tom was successful in his application for an on-licence and the eponymous Cooper's duly

opened in 1991. Sadly, Tom later died but the property has stayed in his family with his now adult children, James and Amy at the helm.

It's reached via a tree lined avenue off the main road in Weston on Trent and we called on a sunny Saturday morning. Having observed numerous fishermen surrounding the 35-peg fishing lake which replaced the gravel, we duly made our way to the lower ground floor level bar. Obliging staff served an excellent pint of Derby Brewing Single Hop Sessions, a mosaic IPA, and we noted the presence of a Cooper's house beer brewed by Leatherbritches, and Draught Bass. I tucked into hake followed by crème brûlée and Maria had fish and chips with

cheese and biscuits for desert. At lower ground level there are three spacious rooms, one with a carvery in the corner. Some of the architectural features are quite remarkable, such as huge stone lintels above doors, and the biggest fireplaces I've seen with original ovens, reflecting the building's antiquity circa 1630.

This exceptionally well-run establishment, which almost has the air of a stately home, is popular with motoring enthusiasts as there's a classic car night on the first and third Thursday of each month, and it's not hard to see why folk seek out the Cooper's even though it's a little off the beaten track.

Paul Gibson

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AMBER VALLEY NEWS



Angels

Branch Award Presentations

We have recently been out and about presenting this year's Branch Award certificates (see photos on this page). Chairman Chris Rogers has been on hand to do the honours. The Branch **Pub of the Year** was the **Angels** micropub in Belper with the runner-up being the **Old Oak** in Horsley Woodhouse and third place going to the **Dead Poets** Inn in Holbrook.

Meanwhile on the **Winter Ale Trail** the best pub went to the **Talbot** in Ripley with the runner-up being **Bang** in Belper.



The Talbot



Old Oak

Beer, Bats & Balls 2023

Amber Valley CAMRA will be running a bar during the free Coronation weekend celebrations at the Belper Cricket Club from **6-8 May**. We will have approx 30 Real Ales and 10 Cider/Perries and there will be 10% off drinks for CAMRA members. This will be an only Beer Festival this year so please come and join in the celebrations.



Bang

DIARY DATES (all meetings 8pm)

Future Branch Meetings (Thursday 8pm):-

6-8 May

Beer, Bats & Balls Bar - Belper Meadows Cricket Club.

Thursday 1st June

Branch Meeting - Dead Poets Inn, Holbrook.

Thursday 29th June

Branch Meeting - Venue TBA.

CAMRA Discounts

Pubs with CAMRA discounts in Amber Valley area - please support:

George and Dragon, Belper - 10p per pint

Dead Poets, Holbrook - 10p per pint,
5p per half

The Talbot, Ripley - 15p per pint, 5p per half

The Thorn Tree, Ripley Market place -
15p per pint

Crossings Club, Ironville - 10% discount anytime,
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The 2023 Winter Ale Trail – the Biggest Ever

When we first started the Winter Ale Trail in January 2017 with just 31 pubs from two CAMRA branches – Derby and Amber Valley – we never imagined that it would grow to this year's event, in which 129 pubs entered, although one pub closed just before the Trail started and another discontinued serving real ale following a change of licensee. However, that's what happened, with pubs from eight different CAMRA Branches – Amber Valley, Ashbourne, Derby, Erewash Valley, Mansfield and Ashfield, Matlock and Dales, Nottingham and Uttoxeter entering pubs.

As usual, we encouraged drinkers, whether CAMRA Members or not, to vote for their top two pubs in each Branch area, and four people sent in votes for pubs from all eight branches taking part, with at least one of them visiting every pub on the trail. The number of votes received was 743, a new record, with almost every pub receiving at least one vote. The eventual winners and runners-up receive CAMRA Certificates to mark their achievement, and they are as follows:

Amber Valley: 1st Talbot, Ripley -
2nd Bang In Belper

Ashbourne: 1st Queens Vaults

Derby: 1st Victoria Inn -
2nd Smithfield

Erewash Valley 1st Bunny Hop,
Langley Mill -
2nd Burnt Pig,
Ilkeston

Mansfield & Ashfield
1st Brown Cow,
Mansfield -
2nd FireRock,
Sutton in Ashfield

Matlock & Dales
1st Newsroom,
Matlock -
2nd Twenty Ten,
Matlock

Nottingham 1st Tap & Growler,
Eastwood -
2nd Roots
Emporium,
Kimberley

Uttoxeter 1st Night Inn,
Uttoxeter

So they're the winners, but as far as we're concerned every pub that took part is a champion, and we thank you all, as we do the CAMRA Branches that supported the trail by entering pubs. We hope to see you next year on the 2024 trail: we'll be in touch about that later this year!

The Eight Branches Winter Ale Trail Organisers

A selection of winners & runners-up photos are featured on this page and throughout the rest of Derby Drinker on the individual Branch pages.



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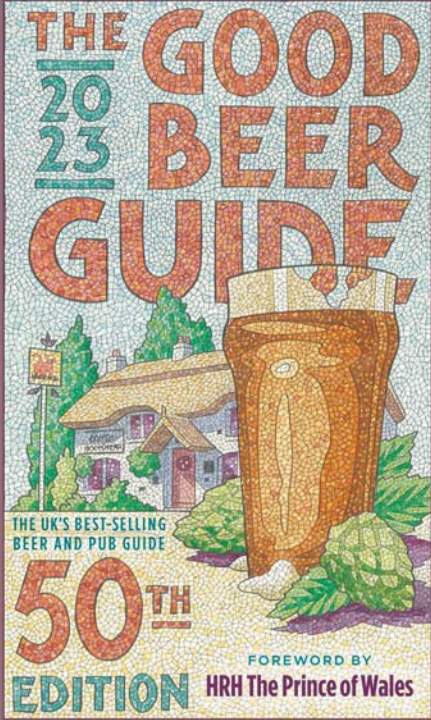
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DERBY Drinker

Derby Drinker Production Schedule

January/February – **December 1st**

March/April – **February 1st**

May/June – **April 1st**

July/August – **June 1st**

September/October – **August 1st**

November/December – **October 1st**

Copy Deadlines in BOLD

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DERBY DRINKER INFORMATION

Derby Drinker is distributed free of charge to pubs in and around Derby by Kevin Hepworth & his team.

Published by: the Derby Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.
Printed by: Jam Print

Edited by: Gareth Stead

Mail to:
44 Duke St, Derby. DE1 3BX

E-mail:
derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk
Website: www.derby.camra.org.uk

Design & layout by: Jam Print
www.jamprint.co.uk

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Additional photographs:

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