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November/December
2023

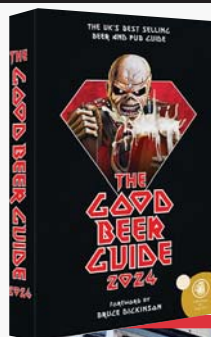
DERBY Drinker

FREE



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Four of the Best for the **GOOD BEER GUIDE** *as new entries celebrate*



The Hoptimist



The Woodlark



The Peacock Inn



The Dragon

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www.derby.camra.org.uk

Welcome

Hello & welcome to our second A5 *Derby Drinker*, we hope you liked the new format. We have had plenty of positive feedback on its new look with some nice comments which is always pleasing. This issue sees all of the usual features return and are set out over the following pages so please sit back and enjoy the read.

And we would also like to hear from you if you have any news, articles, details of any events that might be happening throughout the area, etc as we'd love to promote anything we weren't aware of. Just drop us a line to
derbydrinker@derby.camra.org.uk

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The Derby CAMRA Branch area

We often get asked about the exact area that Derby CAMRA covers, well it is quite extensive and includes the following:- **All of Derby City, Aston-on-Trent, Duffield, Coxbench, Melbourne, Ockbrook, Repton, Shardlow, Ticknall, Weston-on-Trent and Willington.**

We also have a **Sub-Branch** which covers the **Ashbourne** area and they have a regular page of news and features within *Derby Drinker* so check out the updates from that Branch there or take a look at their website

<https://www.facebook.com/AshbourneCAMRA/>

CAMRA Member Discounts on Real Ales

Did you know if you are a CAMRA member you can get a discount with your membership card in many pubs throughout the Country. Derby & Derbyshire pubs offer varying degree of discounts so it's always worth asking when you are at the bar. Derby CAMRA's website has the latest list of participating pubs
www.derby.camra.org.uk/discount-scheme so please check it out.

And if you would like your pub to join the scheme and get some free publicity through our website and social media outlets then please contact the Pubs Officer -
pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk



New Entries in the Good Beer Guide

The recent launch of the 2024 Good Beer Guide saw 4 new entries from within the area covered by the Derby Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. We take a look at this year's four of the best all pictured on the front page.

Within Derby's boundaries 3 new ones appear, one for the first time ever and one after quite a long absence....

Over in the Spondon area of Derby a relatively new micropub the **Hoptimist** on Sitwell Street makes its very first appearance in the guide. It was opened on the 21st December 2021 in a former hardware store in the centre of Spondon and consists of a single room finished in polished wood with the bar set at 90 degrees to the back of the room. A sliding door takes



Derby CAMRA Pubs Officer, Mark Fletcher welcomes the Hoptimist to the Good Beer Guide.

you out to a fully covered area at the back which doubles the size of the pub. Furnishing are a mixture of benches and free-standing chairs and the exposed plain brick walls feature numerous oddments hanging on them. Four changing Real Ales are normally available and it is easily reached from Derby on the regular Ilkeston Flyer bus. Back in the City Centre and

after a 30 year absence the **Woodlark** on Bridge Street in Derby's West End returns to the guide for the first time since 1994. Check out a full article on the pub on page 14. It serves three Real Ales which includes Draught Bass and two changing guest beers. A little known history fact is that the London and North Eastern Railway Friargate line once passed behind the pub on an elevated arched brick bridge.

The **Peacock Inn** on Nottingham Road in Derby last appeared in the Good Beer Guide in 2021. It is an attractive 18th-century stone built roadside pub with two rooms on different levels around a central bar. The decoration consists of wooden floors, stove burners, photos of old Derby and Derby County

Derby CAMRA



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Facebook – DerbyCAMRA

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DerbyCAMRA Branch Diary

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials, meetings and trips.
Here is a list of forthcoming events:

DECEMBER

Thu 7th – Branch Meeting – Nags Head, Mickleover – 8pm.

Thu 14th – Christmas Fuddle – Falstaff, Derby – 8pm.

JANUARY

Thu 11th – Branch Meeting – TBC – 8pm.

FEBRUARY

Thu 8th – AGM – Victoria Inn, Derby – 8pm.

Contact the Social Secretary, by email – socials@derby.camra.org.uk

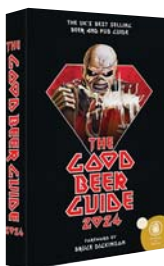
(Check www.derby.camra.org.uk for all upcoming events)

memorabilia. It also features a large covered rear garden courtyard which is popular in warmer weather. The pub serves up to five Real Ales and ciders and/or perries are always available.

Meanwhile out in Derbyshire the **Dragon in Willington** also returns to the guide after a long absence being last in it in 1998. It is set back from the main road and its origins can be traced back 150 years to the construction of the Trent and Mersey canal. The pub has since expanded into the adjacent cottage to give an additional dining area but retains its low ceiling old-world feel. The rear garden seating area overlooks the canal while the front garden has a childrens play area. Three regular Real Ales are served complemented by three changing guest beers and Willington can easily be reached from Derby by train or on the V3 Trent bus.

So, there you have it just a taster of the new entries in the **2024 Good Beer Guide** and if you want to see who else

made it from Derby and Derbyshire then it's now on sale from the CAMRA website, local bookshops and some local pubs such as the Alexandra, Brunswick, Furnace and Smithfield in Derby and the Royal Oak at Ockbrook.



Upcoming Nearby CAMRA Beer Festivals

While Winter tends to see a slow up in CAMRA supported Beer Festivals there are still a few to look forward to (see list below). And remember if you are a CAMRA member then there is usually discounted entry or discounted beer tokens on offer.

Dudley Winter Ales Fayre - 23-25 Nov - Dudley Town Hall.

Chesterfield Beer Festival - 26-27 Jan 2024 - Winding Wheel.

Hucknall Beer Festival - 8-11 Feb 2024 - John Godber Centre.

Great British Beer Festival Winter - 15-17 Feb 2024 - Burton Town Hall.

Cheap bus travel to the Pub & Beer Festivals

Great news - the Government backed National scheme on cheap bus travel has been extended to 31 December 2024. The scheme caps any single bus journey at £2. This is great for a day out visiting pubs, beer festivals & breweries further afield in different towns and cities. From Derby you can travel to the likes of Chesterfield on the Comet or Leicester on the Skylink or Buxton on the Transpeak to name but a few so why not get out & about and make the most of the scheme while it lasts.

Derbyshire CAMRA Branches

South Derbyshire is covered by a number of different CAMRA Branches not just Derby &

Ashbourne but Amber Valley who cover the Alfreton/Belper/Ripley areas, Erewash who cover the Heanor/Ilkeston Long Eaton areas, Burton who cover the South Derbyshire area and Mansfield who cover the South Normanton area. If you live in any of these areas please give your local Branch some support by attending their meetings and socials, they'd love to see you. Check out their websites for details or see below.

Amber Valley CAMRA Diary Dates

Thu 7th Dec - Branch Meeting - Hunters Arms, Kilburn - 8pm.

Fri 29th Dec - Pub Crawl of Nottingham.

Thu 25th Jan - Branch Meeting - Groovers Arms, Peashill - 8pm.

Thu 28th Mar - Branch AGM - Old Oak Inn, Horsley Woodhouse - 8pm.

Belper Beer Census

On **Friday 24th November**, Amber Valley CAMRA is surveying as many pubs in Belper and Milford as they can manage in one evening. Everyone is welcome to help out. All licensed premises are being surveyed, even those that they believe do not sell real ale, so they can build up a picture of what is on sale in the area. There are five different routes starting at 6.30pm and all will end at the Railway on King Street by 9.30pm with plenty of time to socialise and catch a bus home. Full route details can be found on Derby CAMRA's website Diary page under Calendar.



Ashbourne & District CAMRA Branch

Contact Mark Grist m.grist2@sky.com

Branch Award Winners

As previously reported, our tiny sub-branch had two East Midlands regional winners named recently, the **Red Lion at Kniveton** for **Cider Pub of the Year**, and the **Royal British Legion, Parwich**, for **Club of the Year**. Both went through to the last sixteen for the national judging awards, but while the Red Lion was ultimately not successful the Royal British Legion has reached the final four with the winner to be announced on 22nd November at the Club Mirror awards. This is a fantastic achievement for both places and we are very proud of them for getting that far and hope that the RBL can go one better.

House of Beer

Branch members gathered at the House of Beer for our October monthly meeting, actually held on 2nd November, to mark the arrival of the new owners, Rob and Amanda, who took over on 18th September. We wish them all success.

Christmas Social

Our annual Christmas Social evening takes place on **Tuesday 19th December**, following the usual format of starting at Smith's Tavern at 7pm, moving around a few



Branch Chairman, Dave Etheridge presents the East Midlands CAMRA Club of the Year certificate to the Royal British Legion in Parwich.

town venues, then returning to the Tavern to finish off the evening. All are welcome to join us at any stage of the event.

Pub news

The town suffered some major flooding in mid-October. One of the worst affected businesses was **The Bridge** pub, situated alongside the Henmore, which took a lot of water into the cellar and was closed for some time whilst repairs were carried out.

The **Coach and Horses** next door was unaffected, but did reopen in late October after some months of closure.

The **Cock at Clifton** closed in late October as Paul and Bex

left the pub. We wish them well for the future. At the time of going to press, it was not known what would happen to the pub.

The **Ketch at Kniveton** has now sadly closed permanently and a change of use has taken place.

Branch Diary

(subject to changes)

Tuesday 19th December
Christmas Social
- Details on this page.

Thursday 25th January
Branch Meeting
- Yeaveley Arms, Yeaveley

(provisional venue check with Branch) - 8pm.

Pub News

Things are constantly changing on the pub scene so it's nice to catch up on everything we know about in our area. You may already be aware of some of this information but other things you might have missed so we recap here.....

The major news that came through recently was that the Real Brewing Pub Company, the pub company arm of Derby Brewing Company went into administration. The brewery is not affected and will continue with two of their sites, the **Hole in the Wall** in Mickleover & **NOTSA**, in

Aston on Trent continuing to be operated by them under a new pub company name. But the two freehold sites, the **Greyhound** & **Derby Brewing Tap House** in Derby will be sold to clear debts although will remain open for the time being. The Three other sites have now closed - **Clubhouse** in Derby, **Pig in Lichfield** & **Pointing Dogs** in Matlock.

The former Dog and Moon on Sadler Gate has re-opened as the **Shakespeare** a former name after a nice refurbishment from the owners Star Pubs & Bars with fabulous rear patio area. Two Real Ales are currently available.

The **Little Chester Ale House** in Derby should be re-opening at the

end of November. It was sold to the Mad Brewer Pub Co who run the **Bank of Beers** micropub in Melbourne.

The **Bull and Bush** in Mackworth is due to re-open in November after a re-furb with 2 Real Ales.

A new **micropub** in Chaddesden is on the horizon in the premises once known as Chaplins Coffee Lounge.

The **Robin** in Mickleover has re-opened with a new makeover and currently has Pedigree available.

Both the **Merry Widows** & **Maypole** in Derby re-opened in the summer after a period of closure with the same landlady in charge, Jolieanna Davis.

The closed former **Bonnie Prince** pub in Chellaston has re-opened as Hickory's Smokehouse a deep south inspired restaurant.

Several pubs in our area were recently affected by Storm Babet including the **Tap**, **Exeter Arms** and **Smithfield** in Derby and the **Paper Mill** in Darley Abbey who experienced flooding to varying degrees and were closed for a period of time before re-opening after a major clean-up.

The **Fox & Hounds in Coxbench** re-opened recently after re-furbishment and is now run by Leo Hill who runs Arthur's restaurant and Scuffle micro pizzeria, both in Belper.

The **Bull's Head in Denby** which has been closed for much of this year has re-opened with 2 real ales on the bar.

The **Talbot Taphouse in Ripley** was sold at auction recently subject to a lease, so things will remain the same.

The **Dog in Pentrich** has re-opened after a period of closure.

And finally, the **Bunny Hop** micropub in **Langley Mill** has sadly closed for good due to the current economic climate and difficulties in making ends meet. However, a sign on the pub has appeared recently saying re-opening shortly so watch this space?

Derby Drinker would like to thank other local newsletters and CAMRA members for these updates, but the usual disclaimer applies to the info provided.

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- 30 THE CINELLI BROTHERS

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- 8 BLONDIED
- 9 DR. FEELGOOD
- 14 THE BLUETONES ACOUSTIC
- 15 ULTIMATE COLDPLAY
- 16 NINE BELOW ZERO
- 17 THE FILLERS
- 20 SLADE UK
- 21 BON JOVI FOREVER

DECEMBER

- 22 FLEETWOOD BAC
- 23 FLEETWOOD BAC
- 27 LOVE DISTRACTION
- 28 FLASH
- 29 UPBEAT BEATLES
- 30 ELECTRIK LIVE ORCHESTRA

JANUARY 2024

- 27 FOO FIGHTERS GB

FEBRUARY

- 22 STILL MARILLION
- 3 THE DOORS ALIVE
- 10 GLORY DAYS
- 16 AC/DC UK
- 17 STRAIGHTEN OUT
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THURSDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2023

THE FLOWERPOT, DERBY

Past Winners of Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year Awards are a Salient Reminder to Cast Your Vote

It's that time of the year when CAMRA members' thoughts turn to nominating their favourite pubs for the prestigious Pub of the Year awards. This year, for the first time, a new category of Suburban Pub of the Year has been created reflecting the city's expansion. As a reminder of those who have triumphed in the 21stC, we have listed past winners. To cast your pub votes for city, suburban, country and also club of the year email pubsofficer@derby.camra.org.uk or text **0771 2669581** quoting your name and membership no.

Year	Pub	Licensee	Year	Pub	Licensee
2000	Royal Oak, Ockbrook	Olive Wilson	2014	Furnace, Derby	Pedro Menon
2001	Rowditch, Derby	Steve Birkin	2015	Alexandra, Derby	Ralf Edge/ A Dyson-Edge
2002	Dolphin, Derby	Terry Holmes	2016	Brunswick, Derby	Alan Pickersgill
2003	Smithfield, Derby	Roger Myring	2017	Brunswick, Derby	Alan Pickersgill
2004	Old Stables Bar, Denby	Roger Creighton	2018	Smithfield, Derby	Ben Miller/ Emily Bowler
2005	Babington, Derby	Tom Taylor	2019	Smithfield, Derby	Ben Miller/ Emily Bowler
2006	Bell, Smalley	Angela Bonsall	2020	Smithfield, Derby	Ben Miller/ Emily Bowler
2007	Flower Pot, Derby	John Evans	2021	Smithfield, Derby	Ben Miller/ Emily Bowler
2008	Barley Mow, Kirk Ireton	Mary Short	2022	Smithfield, Derby	Ben Miller/ Emily Bowler
2009	Old Oak, Horsley Woodhouse	Roger Creighton	2023	Falstaff, Derby	Jim Hallows/ Steph Briggs
2010	Dead Poets, Holbrook	Bill Holmes			
2011	Silk Mill, Derby	Terry Holmes			
2012	Five Lamps, Derby	Graham Browett			
2013	Exeter Arms, Derby	Martin Roper			



The FALSTAFF
74 Silverhill Road,
Derby DE21 6UJ



The POTHOLE
Park Farm, Allestree
Derby DE22 2QQ

Brewery News

Dancing Duck Brewery

We had a very busy August in the brewery including a successful "Night in the brewery" which saw around 80 people come to have a look around whilst enjoying a few beers and our famous huge chip cobs. *See photos on the right.*

We've installed our 6th fermenter and finally got round to putting some additional insulation on the top of our hot water tank in an effort to curb the ever increasing energy costs.

Our new sales and marketing lady Becky Clarke who started in June is all settled in.

Batches of our gin are in production, we make a dry gin, a citrus gin and an Indian spiced gin.

Rachel Matthews

Falstaff Brewery

We have just brewed an 1866 BASS recipe, called P2 at 8.4%, revived by Steve Wellington. This is a dark, rich imperial stout. An exceptionally smooth stout produced from the original recipe that was shipped to the Russian port of St. Petersburg for the Czar's Imperial Court. The smooth mellowness derives from the long maturation time in cask. Brewed by Jim Hallows at the Falstaff by the special request of John Arguile, Les Baynton & Dave Evans

Jim Hallows

Brunswick Brewing

We are very pleased to have been approached by the 'Seeing Dog's Alliance', a national guide dog charity, to brew them a special beer to help raise funds towards training and procuring new Seeing Dogs. Named by the charity, 'Double Vision' is a golden 4.4% ale, hopped with a combination of Rakau from N.Z and Idaho 7 and Simcoe



from the U.S, to give a crisp refreshing fruity citrus hop palette. The beer will initially be launched at the Brunswick Inn's annual beer festival (4th-8th October), then to the wider free-trade. Several establishments have already reserved a firkin so the beer is going fast, and Everards brewery have agreed to put it through their pub estate in November. At the moment 80 firkins are planned to be produced, with possibly more, and 10p from every pint sold will be donated to the 'Seeing Dog's Alliance'. Reserve yours now or call the brewery for more details!

James Salmon



Derby Drinker Q&A Meet the Brewer - Dancing Duck



Continuing our feature about breweries in the Derby branch area, in this issue we meet with Rachel Matthews, founder of the award winning Dancing Duck Brewery. It is situated on Payne Street, off Ashbourne Road, Derby.



DD. What did you do prior to running the brewery?

RM. Prior to setting up Dancing Duck I was working as a mortgage advisor for about ten years, a job I just fell into. I knew it wasn't what I wanted to do long term. I really wanted to start a business of my own.

DD. Why did you decide to start a brewery and when did it produce its first brew?

RM. In my mid-thirties I got into real ale and decided I wanted to set up a microbrewery. I had always wanted to have my own business but was never totally sure what to do. Many of the ideas I had, friends thought they were, well silly, but most of them thought the microbrewery idea was a good one.

DD. How did you gain the necessary knowledge to be a brewer?

RM. Initially I set up a test brewery in the conservatory at home. About 35 trial batches were produced, which led to Ay Up, 22 and Gold. I also managed to get a job at the Blue Monkey Brewery, just after it had opened. From the start I was honest with John Hickling, the owner, that I wanted to start my own brewery, ultimately a direct competitor. He was very supportive, taking me on to learn how to brew and how a brewery works, initially for

three months, but I was there for fifteen months. He then suggested it was time to leave and set up on my own. Having got everything in place the first brew was completed in December 2010, with Ay Up and Gold going into the pubs the week before Christmas.

DD. Did you face any obstacles at the beginning, being a female in a traditionally male occupation?

RM. Even though women have been brewing for a long time there was a lot of interest, in that I was a woman brewing, some novelty value too. Generally there weren't any misogynistic views about what I was doing. However, a landlord at a Ilkeston pub couldn't believe there was a female brewer and said, on a beer delivery, well it had better be good then. On the next delivery, they acknowledged Dancing Duck beer was very good, much to their surprise.

DD. What does quality mean to you?

RM. Consistency, making good beer time after time and that the next pint tastes the same as the last one. Also, cleanliness is hugely important, otherwise you compromise the taste and flavour of the brew and the risk of having to throw a batch away.

DD. What efforts do you make to be environmentally friendly?

RM. The spent grain is recycled via a local pig farmer, to be used as animal feed and the used hops go to local allotments. When the wort is chilled after boiling, the hot water from the heat exchanger is stored in the hot liquor tank and brought up to the correct temperature for the next brew. The hot liquor tank has recently had its insulation upgraded to improve heat retention. Unfortunately the roof of the building cannot support the weight of solar panels, another option I looked into. Basically, I do all that I can to reduce the breweries impact on the environment based on the building and its location.

DD. What's the worst mistake you have made while brewing?

RM. So far, we have not made any major mistakes, largely due to my time spent at Blue Monkey and the experience gained working with them. I have a great team around me with a range of brewing expertise and by listening to them it minimises the chance of mistakes occurring. Accidents cannot be avoided sometimes, such as a contractor dropping an electrical drill in to the fermenter and that batch had to be thrown away.

DD. How many people do you employ?

RM. There are currently eight at the brewery, covering admin, brewing and deliveries, plus the brewery dog who is on meet and greet duties!

DD. Do you have any advice for other females thinking of starting a brewery?

RM. It would be the same advice that I would give to anyone looking to set up their own brewery. Do your homework, find out who your

market is, what is it that the drinker in a pub wants - not what you like, listen to people giving advice, and decide what is good advice and bad advice and then go for it.

DD. Do you offer brewery tours so people can get an understanding of how beer is produced?

RM. We don't do tours, mainly due to brewing six days a week and people needing time off from work. What we do is for a couple of nights in the year we

open up in the evening so people can come along to see the brewery. Obviously beer is available together with a chip cob and souvenir glass. It's a very sociable evening. At the last one around eighty people attended and they all had a very enjoyable evening.

DD. What is your favourite hop?

RM. There's a question! Difficult one to answer as there are so many new ones coming out and a lot of good existing varieties. I think if I had to choose one then it would be Centennial, a big citrusy American hop, very good as a single hop in beer. Earlier in the year I was a judge at a British hop growers' event and there are some new home-grown ones emerging that are very interesting.

DD. Are you responsible for creating new beers or is it a team effort?

RM. I have done most of them, my husband has created some and the brewing team have also been involved with a few new beers. We invested in a brewmaster to trial some of the new brews but generally rely on experience and go straight into production with a new beer. We have brewed around thirty beers and so far all have been successful. In fact, we must be doing things right as both Dark Drake and Ay Up have won awards at national level, which I think for a small independent brewery is pretty good going.

Andrew Norman



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Ripley's First New-Build Pub Opens in Half a Century

he Groover's Arms, 151 Peasehill, is Ripley's first new-build pub since the (now demolished) Woodman, Maple Avenue, was built for Hardy and Hanson (Kimberley) brewery in 1974. Steve Cresswell ran the Beehive (ex-Home Brewery) on the same parcel of land as the Groover's for donkey's years and the space vacated by the demolition of two cottages in the 1970s presented Steve with the opportunity to self-build a new pub, and convert the ground floor of the existing one to enlarge his domestic accommodation. Steve enlisted the services of Beehive regular, Bernard, who at 81 still turns his hand to building work.

The Groover's Arms title references Steve's passion for DJ-ing and the single storey



premises is a rendered, gabled two-roomed affair with a pleasant patio & garden to the front and side which will catch the sun come next spring. A covered skittle alley at the side completes the picture where live bands will perform in warmer weather. Inside, a state-of-the-art ground floor stillage facilitates the serving of beer by a sophisticated air pressure system with some beers served straight from the cask. Steve's choice of beer is impeccable, with a strong Dancing Duck and Blue Monkey representation augmenting old favourites such as Draught Bass. Those partial to craft keg also have

plenty to choose from.

Although set back from the road, the retention of Home Brewery signage on the original pub means you're unlikely to miss this modern addition to Ripley's drinking scene and it opens at 4.00pm weekdays and 2.00pm weekends. If travelling from Derby catch the Comet or Nines bus to Peasehill getting off at the 'Springs Christian Centre' stop.

Steve's daughter, Katie, runs the **Angels Micro Pub**, high up on **Belper's Market Place**, and the former stables to the town's long-gone thatched pub is the current **Amber Valley CAMRA Pub of the Year**, progressing to be East Midlands CAMRA runner up, and is **2024 Good Beer Guide** listed.

Paul Gibson

15 – 17 February 2024 - Burton Town Hall

CAMRA are really excited to be bringing everyone back together in Burton upon Trent in February for the Great British Beer Festival Winter. As the winter counterpart to CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival, visitors will find a fantastic range of not only dark and winter brews but a great selection of light and hoppy ales to sample over the period. The festival will feature hundreds of cask and craft beers, ciders, perries and gin in the beautiful surrounds of Burton Town Hall, where visitors can also enjoy a range of entertainment and food throughout the weekend. It will also be home to the prestigious Champion Winter Beer of Britain awards. Tickets are available to buy in advance from the CAMRA website. Further details in the next Issue but put the dates in your diary now and don't miss out on this fantastic event.



Inn Focus: The Woodlark, Bridge Street, Derby



The Woodlark is one of Derby's West End's great survivors and the photographs adorning the walls attest to its enduring presence in the local community. Opposite the old Banks's mill, this is very much a locals' pub but also welcoming to all. In John Arguile's excellent book *Derby and Ale*, published earlier this year, John notes that this was an Offiler's house in 1926 and was subsequently run by Bass after its takeover of the Derby brewery in the mid 1960s.

Pleasingly, the Woodlark has bucked the post-pandemic trend of reduced opening hours by opening at 10.00am, thus living up to the "early bird that catches the worm," although here in Bridge Street it's the customers who patronise the pub early doors. Originally named the Mechanic Arms, it was re-titled the Woodlark in 1862, and internally it's altered considerably since the Margett's tenure in the 1990s when it was three-roomed and a popular haunt of CAMRA members. Now, it is largely knocked through with areas of differing aesthetics, the most characterful of which is the beamed bar area with traditional bar back,

and at the rear is a conservatory with a patio beyond. Football memorabilia abounds including, of course, the Rams, and live matches shown here are a magnet for many. Derby isn't blessed with a plethora of food pubs but hot meals at very reasonable prices are served until 3.00pm and from noon to 4.00pm on Sundays. The Chicken Rogan Josh at a fiver looked a steal. Real ale drinkers are drawn to Draught Bass, the pub's biggest seller, permanently vying for attention with a brace of changing guests which on my visit were Dancing Duck Gold and Yorkshire Blonde from Ossett. Prices start at just £3.40 (September 2023).

Licensee, Bonnie, has seen her efforts rewarded with inclusion in the **2024 CAMRA Good Beer Guide**, the Woodlark's first listing in thirty years and the pub was runner up in the "Best Pub in Derby North" competition organised by the area's MP, Amanda Solloway.

For value for money and a warm welcome, it takes some beating.

Paul Gibson

"THE ENERGY, MUSICIANSHIP
AND CREATIVITY FROM
THESE TWO IS INSPIRING AND
HUGELY ENTERTAINING!"

- JONATHAN, LONDON > AUDIENCE MEMBER

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concept: mark fletcher; graphic © john arguile

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