



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.

Angels Micro Pub

29 Market Place
Belper DE56 1FZ
Serving eight or more
real ales from the barrel and a
similar number of ciders & perries

Derbyshire South CAMRA POTY
Winner 2023
Amber Valley CAMRA Cider POTY
Winner 2020
Amber Valley CAMRA Mild Trail
Winner 2019

Beer & Pub News

As is almost certainly widely known by now, the Real Brewing Pub Company, the pub company arm of **Derby Brewing Company**, went into administration on 27th October. The brewery itself is trading as normal.


Of the pubs affected, the **Hole in the Wall** (Mickleover) and **NOTSA** (Aston-on-Trent) remain open and continue to be operated by **Derby Brewing** under a new pub company. The **Greyhound** (Friar Gate, Derby) and the **Derby Brewing Tap House** (Derwent Street, Derby) have been put on the market as going concerns and the sale is being handled by Savills. No guide price is given (POA). The **Clubhouse** (Derby), the **Pig** (Lichfield) and the **Pointing Dogs** (Matlock) closed with immediate effect.

The following is an extract from the statement issued by Paul Harris (MD, **Derby Brewing Company**)...

"It has been an extremely challenging trading environment over the last couple of years, including the pandemic, increased loan burdens on the back of this, ongoing recruitment challenges, soaring interest rates, supplier cost

increases, cost of living crisis resulting in reduced trade and huge increases in the cost base with uncapped energy contracts".

The full statement can be found on the **Derby Brewing Company** Facebook page dated 27th October.



The Dew Drop Inn

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

A selection of the finest cask ales,
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Two minutes walk from Ilkeston train station

Mon-Thur: 4.00-10.00, Fri: 2.00-11.00
Sat: 12.00-11.00, Sun: 12.00-10.00

The **Cross Keys** on Belper Market Place has been taken over by the Pub People Company and Trish & Gary are the new landlady/landlord - is land-persons a word? The current opening hours are Mon/Tue, closed, Wed-Sun, 3.00 pm. The pub opened at 12.00 on Saturday 11th November to coincide with the Belper Farmers Market which is held on the 2nd Saturday of each month (excluding January). The pub has an open-mic session every Thursday with other live music events also hosted. The real ale list is regularly posted on Real Ale Finder with recent offerings being from **Salt, Navigation, Magic Rock, Castle Rock, Pheasantry** and **Oakham**.

It has also just been revealed that the Pub People Company have taken over the **Spotted Cow**, the community owned pub in Holbrook. Managing Director of Pub People, Andrew Crawford, informed "In The Sticks"...

"I am delighted to confirm that Pub People have purchased the freehold of the **Spotted Cow** at Holbrook. We will continue to offer an excellent range of local and regional cask ales which are proving very popular. The pub is a focal point of the community and we would like to maintain this close relationship by supporting local causes and activities".

The Derby Telegraph (5th October) reported that the **Spotted Calf** café, adjacent to the pub, had closed in early October due to trading difficulties and its fate is not

currently known. I think it's important to thank the investors of the Holbrook Community Society who saved the pub from being converted into housing back in 2017 and hopefully its future is now assured.

The **Dog** at Pentrich re-opened on 3rd November under new ownership/management after having been closed for about 8 months.

Having only reported in the November issue of "In The Sticks" that the **Bunny Hop** in Langley Mill had closed, like a Phoenix from the ashes, it quite quickly re-opened under the original owners, Harley & Steph, on 4th November. Live music features prominently as usual plus up to 5 cask ales.

April and the team welcome you to the

THORN TREE INN

21 Chesterfield Road, Belper
Tel: 07974 470774

Winner of the Amber Valley
CAMRA Winter Ale Trail 2019

Live Music --- Quiz Nights

Family and dog friendly

Real Ale, Real Cider, Real Fire
Real Pub

The flooding that severely affected the **Smithfield** (as well as the **Exeter Arms** and **Brewery Tap**) in Derby at the end of October also caused the closure of the **Dew Drop Inn**, Ilkeston when the Erewash broke its banks. The **Smithfield** managed to re-open after about a week but getting the **Dew Drop** cleaned up has taken a lot longer. Tony Fletcher wrote to "In The Sticks"...

"Yes the Erewash backed up and flooded the cellar right to the top of the ceiling! All the electrics and gas boiler etc have gone and it was an awful mess!! We are still closed whilst repairs are going on, all beer lines and pumps have to be replaced but we are aiming to re-open, fingers crossed, on Friday 17th Nov [now delayed to 24th]. The pub itself escaped any damage thankfully!!"

Our man on the spot, the Dider, sent in this report...

The pub had to close at 8.30 pm on Friday 20th October as the cellar became too flooded despite an electric pump trying to pump flooded water out. Unfortunately, it

became impossible as the water knocked all the electrics out etc. and with the nearby Erewash canal bursting its banks, cellar water rose to a record high. As I left [the pub] the water was at the front door and I left carrying my socks and shoes as it was well above my ankles! The pub hoped to open on Friday 17th November with new electrics, new beer lines, new cooler - in fact a total cellar renovation, as it destroyed so much. Tony and Helen announced that the workmen wouldn't be able to complete the job on time which was a major blow after all the hard work they had put in. The pub now hopes to open Friday 24th November when I expect the pub to be rammed. All the very best of luck to Tony & Helen. **The Didler.**

Charisma Bypass reported that the **Elephant & Peacock** (former Strutt Arms) in Milford operate a "happy hour" on Tuesday to Friday (4.00 pm - 6.00 pm) and Saturday (3.00 pm - 5.00 pm) when the cask ales are priced at £3.00 a pint. **TT Landlord** and **Dancing Duck 22** were on the bar when Charisma called in.

Ian at the **Jolly Sailor**, Hemington revealed that the following cask ales are a selection of the beers that will be on the bar in the lead up to Christmas: **Marble Mild** (4.3%), **Castle Rock Door Of The Cosmos** (4.0% & **Time Traveller** (4.3%), **Black Iris Snake Eyes** (3.8%), **North Riding Nectar** (4.5%), **Shiny Flag Captain** (3.7%) and **Liquid Light Talk To The Wind** (5.3%).



The Groovers Arms

151 Peasehill, Ripley. Tel: 07510 431414

Selection of 9 real ales, 17 craft keg plus ciders & perries, many sourced from the south west and Herefordshire

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

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

In the November issue of "In The Sticks", Big Al reported that he had been charged £6.40 for a pint of cask ale at the **Old Contemptibles** pub near Snow Hill Station in Birmingham. He posted a comment on TripAdvisor about the price of ale and the manager, Rob, responded...

"As you have seen from our previous responses, as a managed house [the pub is owned by the Nicholson's group] we unfortunately do not have control over our prices, so, we control what we can, thank you for mentioning our friendly staff we are proud of that, and I will happily pass this on to them (they love good feedback). We have also just made the good beer guide again".

A Facebook post reports that Liz & Charlie will be leaving the **Tiger Bar** (Lock Up Yard, Derby) at the end of the year and the new

hosts, from 1st January, will be Jo & Bill Upton. "In The Sticks" reader, Growler Chris reported that a guest beer is now available (**Dancing Duck** when he visited) and that the ale quality was very good. Yes, I know, it's hardly RuRAD but I've got column inches to fill! Ed.

Contributors: Charisma Bypass, Chris P Duck, the Didler, Growler Chris, Kirk Jones, Rodders, Snug Dave



The Burnt Pig Ale House

Erewash Valley CAMRA Pub of the Year 2017, 2019, 2020 & 2021

Also mini-kegs, pork pies, cheeses black puddings, pork scratchings etc.

53 Market Street, Ilkeston, DE7 5RB
Tel: 07812 158219




RuRAD Snippets

The **Burnt Pig**, Ilkeston is one of the area's best loved ale houses and is thriving under the care of landlord Ben Rigby who took over from Simon Clarke (a hard act to follow) in June 2022. Here is a view from Huddersfield visitors, Carol & Nigel Fox...

Round the corner was the gem of the whole trip and one pub we had fancied for a while - the **Burnt Pig**. What a cracking place this is with not only fabulous beer but the food cabinets are something else with cheese, pies, pasties, pork pies and maybe other things too. First beer - there was **Falstaff Smiling Assassin** which we rated as best beer of our trip and scored a 4 on WhatPub. Also sampled **w e r e Stockport West Coast IPA, Leatherbritches Dovedale, R B A Vampire Black** and finally **Shipstones IPA**. All beers superb and the locals too once again made us feel very welcome. **Carol & Nigel Fox.**

Please also note that the pub will be hosting a **Urban Chicken Ale** tap takeover on 2nd December.

Beer Festival News

The **Redemption Ale House** (3 Ray Street, Heanor) will be holding a 25 Beers of Christmas Advent Beer Festival from Thursday 30th November to Sunday 3rd December. Landlady Bernadette Lawley wrote to "In The Sticks"...

"Following on from the great success of our Advent Beer Festival last year, we are holding a similar beer fest this December - The 25 Beers of Christmas. It will feature either brand new beers or beers not previously on the bar at the **Redemption**".

The Loughborough Winter Pub Trail which was originally planned for November will now take place from 7th to 10th December. The

pubs taking part are: **Needle & Pin, White Hart, Moonface Brewery & Tap, Organ Grinder, Wheeltapper** and **Swan in the Rushes**. No further details are available at the time of going to press but the Facebook pages of the individual participants are expected to post what will be available. And there will be badges too!

Charisma Bypass attended the event back in June and reported that "We had a cracking day out and are looking forward to the next one". A full account of his visit can be found in the September issue of "In The Sticks".

Not really a beer festival, but Alan Pickersgill at the **Brunswick**, Derby wanted readers to know about what's in store at the pub in the period leading up to Christmas...

"Lots of pubs offer lots of great new beers. Ticks if you like. We have been no different in our years as Derby's first independent multi-ale house. We have got through some 8250 different ales in our last 10 years. This festive season we are going to be bringing you some of Britain's favourite real ales for you to sample. We aim on doing two different beers a week. These are likely to include **Fuller's ESB, Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby, Harvey's Sussex Best, Hop Back Crop Circle, Theakston Old Peculier** and **St Austell Proper Job**".



BLACK BULLS HEAD

2 Kilburn Lane, Openwoodgate
Belper, Derbyshire
DE56 0SF

In The Papers

The Derby Telegraph (1st November) reported that the **Tavern** in Tansley will close from 13th to 28th November while it undergoes a £210k refurbishment. The work will be undertaken by Heineken Star Pubs & Bars and the current licensee, Gareth Richards, who took over the pub in August 2022. It is likely that there will be some disruption during the week leading up to closure but the pub is expected to remain open.

The Derby Telegraph (8th November) announced that the **Wilmot Arms** in Chaddesden closed on 5th November for refurbishment which would take "between three and four weeks". The pub has been sold by the **Steamin Billy Brewing Company** but the article did not say who the new owners were.

The Derby Telegraph (17th November)

reported that the **Ashford Arms** in Ashford-in-the-Water has been acquired by Longbow Bars and Restaurants, owned by Bakewell resident, Rob Hattersley, and is expected to re-open early in 2024 following a £1.6m refurbishment in conjunction with Heineken Star Pubs & Bars.

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

ROYAL OAK
55 Green Lane, Ockbrook, DE72 3SE
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**Derby CAMRA
Country Pub of the Year - 2022**
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Gold Award Winner - East Midlands

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Beer garden and separate children's play area
Lunches Served: Every Day from 12.00
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Out & About

Cask & Pottle, Tutbury An Alternative View

In the October issue of "In The Sticks" Snug Dave called in at the **Cask & Pottle** in Tutbury and didn't find it particularly friendly or welcoming (apart from the terrier). Huddersfield residents, Carol & Nigel Fox, also visited recently and had a different view, so it's only fair to hear what they have to say...

A lovely little micro-pub which was an ex sweetshop. Talk about being made welcome - we were soon chatting with the locals and palling up with the terrier which tried to make a meal of Nigel's coat. Beers were smashing and we had **Burton Bridge Stairway To Heaven**, **Froth Blowers Templar Amber** and **Heritage Charrington IPA** (a Burton Brewery museum effort). It's a cracking little pub and easily accessible from Burton or Derby. **Carol & Nigel Fox**.

Included in the November issue of "In The Sticks" was an article by Scott Spencer who authors a pub & beer blog called Micropub Adventures (www.micropubadventures.co.uk). He recently visited and wrote about a visit to Ilkeston, Heanor, Ripley and Langley Mill and although the article will not be printed here, it is an excellent summary of the real ale pubs in our area - and with photos too.

Kidsgrove, 18th Aug, 2023

Kidsgrove was one of the few places I had not visited on the Derby to Crewe railway line and on this occasion I took the Old Fruit. On arrival we initially took a walk out of the town to the Bath Pool which is a park lake close to the disused dry ski slope. After this we walked up the very steep Nelson Bank to reach the **Rifleman**, as this appeared to be the only pub that served meals. We were not disappointed in that aspect with my enormous fish with hand-cut chips being superb quality

and value at £11.75. There were 3 cask ales with 2 empty pulls and I had **Wye Valley Butty Bach** and **Exmoor Pale**, both decent enough and with **GK Abbot** not tried.

It was then a walk back to the Liverpool Road where firstly we tried the **Crown & Thistle**. This is a community pub on the busy main road which has multiple seating areas on different levels and sensitive restoration with beamed ceilings. At the rear is a terraced garden with far reaching views beyond the town to the Cheshire hills. The proper traditional pub landlord offered fewer guest ales than usual (apparently) but has regular **Burton Bridge** ales plus **GK Abbot**. My excellent **Stairway To Heaven** was the best beer of the day with **Sovereign** & **BB Bitter** also available.

Just down the road is the **Plough**, another nicely renovated open plan town pub with a friendly landlady on duty. I had a taste of an unknown **Salopian** ale but it was too like **Oakham Citra** which was also on, so I settled for a traditional **Bass**. This proved to be a great choice and we settled down to chat to a local dog walker. About ten minutes walk away was the **GBG Blue Bell** and I had no idea that their beer festival had just started that day. With time running short I ignored the outside marquee with festival ales as there were already six ales on at the regular bar. We managed 5 quick halves between us of **Three Tuns Best**, **Whim Joker**, **Brew York X-Panda**, **Castle Rock Oatmeal Stout** and a collaboration involving **Beartown** with **Whim Arbor Light** not tried. I believe that there were a dozen more ales outside but preferred to not look what they were with no time to sample them. Difficult to judge on this occasion but it appeared to be a top pub with quirky rooms and a large outside area adjacent to the canal, which also offered a waterside walk back to the station. **Chris P Duck**.

Tracy and all the staff welcome you
to the

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Chorley, 17th Sept, 2023

For this rail trip organised by Pothole Ady, I was also accompanied by Mythical John and Showbiz Steve. Our train from Derby to Sheffield was delayed so with a minimal changeover time I was pulled by Ady through the closing doors of the departing Manchester train despite the protestations of the railway guard. Less of a problem at

Manchester Piccadilly where the train was spot on time, and on arrival in Chorley we headed straight to the nearby **GBG Malt 'n' Hops** for our first drinks. The pub has an imposing green and cream façade and we sat in a raised alcove with a few locals present. The right-angled bar is flanked by wood panelling and etched mirrors in a traditional pub interior style. I had **Crafty Fox**, one of two from **Wily Fox**, followed by **Bank Top Dark Mild**, the latter being particularly good. Of the 9 cask ales the remainder came from **Black Edge** (x2), **Goose Eye**, **Ossett** (x2) and **Moorhouses**, so a great selection of mostly local ales. Whilst here we also indulged in a filled cob from the bar at a ridiculous price of just £1.

Tash & Andy welcome you to the
Dead Poets Inn
38 Chapel Street, Holbrook - (01332) 780301
Award Winning Ale & Cider House
8 traditional ales +
up to 16 traditional ciders
Food served:
Tue-Thur 12.00-14.00
Fri-Sun, 12.00-16.00

Moving back across the railway we eventually found the **GBG Bob Inn** which is a tiny micro-bar situated within the market hall and with covered outside seating which we used. Of the three cask ales, our choice would have been **Brewsmith Oatmeal Stout** but this promptly ran out so we had to choose between **Loxley** and **New World**, both from **Milestone**, both of which were well received. Not far from here was the unimaginatively named **GBG Ben's Tap**, another micro-pub in a converted shop on a pedestrianised street. This is the tap for the local **Ben's Brewery** and featured 4 of their ales plus guests from **Craven Brew** and **Shed Beer**. My **Ben's The Duke** was good and the friendly service received so far continued. On the same street is the **GBG Flat Iron**, an attractive looking building outside, perhaps for some, a little spoiled inside by the multiple TVs showing sport. The beer range and quality was certainly good with ales from **Black Edge**, **Cross Bay**, **Butcombe**, **Kirkstall** plus **Ossett White Rat**.

Again not far away at **GBG Riley's**, we found it to be a modern style café bar catering mainly for keg drinkers but the keen barman was happy to offer samples of the two cask ales and the kegs. The other three had **Electric Bear Firkin Hard Or Hardly Firkin** so I had to be different with the **Twisted Wheel Speed Wobble** but both were very good. Whilst here something we noticed triggered a bizarre conversation based on "Hector" which began with our former favourite Kevin at DCFC but ended in a frankly ridiculous spiel about the

Hector's House TV programme. Although all of these places were close together we still contrived to go the wrong way before arriving at the **GBG Shepherds' Hall Ale House & Victoria Rooms**. Originally a micro-pub it has now extended into the adjoining building, all located on a street corner. My **Cross Bay S.M.A.S.H.** was possibly my best beer of the day with others coming from **Hophurst** (x2), **Titanic** and surprisingly **Black Hole Milky Way** from our home area. Whilst here it was also surprising to find a live folk band including a harpist in the Victoria Rooms area. No jokes about "harpist" in a pub please.

Our final call in Chorley was at the **GBG Ale Station**, yet another micro-pub based on a railway theme and with a useful digital display screen showing live train departures. An impressive ale selection where I sampled **Settle Main Line Bitter** and **Holts Mild** with others from those two plus **Pictish Kazbek**, **Hawkshead Pale** and **Desert Rat** from **The Rat Brewery**. The train time display signalled our departure from a great day in Chorley but we were soon off the train again at the next stop, Adlington. We marched up the hill to reach the **GBG Old Post Office** which is the brewery tap for **Escape Brewery**. A popular micro-pub it duly held 3 **Escape** ales at the bar and my **Erik Weisz** was very good indeed. Then back down the hill past the station to the **GBG Spinners Arms**, known locally as

"Bottom Spinners" as there is another pub that we had passed earlier of the same name. Here we all had **Fyne Ales Jarl** that was excellent rather than a **Little Critters Special** or the more standard fare of **Landlord**, **Bass** or **Titanic Plum Porter**. We also left the next train at the Oxford Road station in Manchester to visit **Bundobust Brewery** which is close by. It was very loud and crowded so, when we saw no cask ales, settled for a couple of keg beers before departing for the next train home via Sheffield. **Chris P Duck**.

Youlgreave, 18th November 2023

Together with four hiking companions, I enjoyed a week-end in the White Peak where we stayed in one of the three pubs in Youlgreave, interestingly named the **Farmyard** - and after our daily walks we dined and supped in the local hosteleries.

The **Farmyard** is a quaint, cosy pub with a huge fire. Sammy and Joe the licensees took over only 6 weeks ago and both they and their staff were enthusiastic and as welcoming as their lovely fire. Hand-pulled ales available were **TT Landlord**, **Greene King Gangly Ghoul**, **Theakston Old Peculier** and **Deuchars IPA**. Our entire group deemed them all to be served to a high standard. A five minutes stroll along the road towards the impressive

All Saints Church will bring you to the **Bulls Head**. The facade and large archway suggest that this was a coaching inn in days of yore. Hand-pulled ales included **Wainwrights**, **Bank's Sunbeam**, **Marston's 61 Deep** and **Pedigree**. The very friendly landlord, Martin informed me that he serves a changing beer selection. We sampled the **Wainwrights** and **Sunbeam** which were in excellent condition. A decent sized pub with Snug, main lounge & darts & pool room. Evidently a locals pub with a very friendly atmosphere.

Proceeding further along the road opposite the church is the **George Hotel**. My word, a proper pub! I got the impression it would have been much the same had I visited in 1949. Three different rooms all accessing the bar and we amused ourselves playing darts. Stephen, the friendly and very jolly landlord, informed me that he has a changing selection of ales which on our visit included **Holdens Golden Glow**, **Theakston Best Bitter**, **TT Landlord & Wincle Sir Philip**. I'm a big **Wincle** fan and the **Sir Philip** was excellent.

All three pubs serve excellent meals and the licensees were more than pleased that their hosteleries were being featured in RuRAD. I and my hiking companions were jointly impressed with the beer, fare & welcome that we received at all three pubs and are looking forward to a return visit. **Hes**.

Beer Festival Diary - Near and Not so Near

- 30th Nov-3rd Dec. 25 Beers of Christmas Advent Beer Festival. Redemption Ale House, Ray Street, Heanor. 25 ales
30th Nov-3rd Dec. Campbell Street Brewery Taproom Open Weekend. Campbell Street, Belper
2nd Dec. Burnt Pig - Urban Chicken Ale Tap Takeover. Burnt Pig, Market Street, Ilkeston. 6 cask, 1 keg (sour)
7th-10th Dec. Loughborough Winter Pub Trail. See Beer Festival News section for participants
8th-9th Dec. The Smithfield Nano Christmas Crackers - Nano Brewery Tap Takeover. Meadow Lane, Derby. 20+ ales
14th-17th Dec. Welcome To The Darkside IV, Stout & Porter Festival. Tom Said Micropub, Well Street, Ripley. 5 cask, 3 keg
16th Dec. Christmas (Tickers Ball) Festival. The Fat Cat, 23 Alma Street, Sheffield.

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

4th-10th Dec. Orb Micropub 6th Birthday Beer Festival. 28 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington

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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Disclaimer: The RuRAD team would like to wish the readers of "In The Sticks" a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year. However, if the ale turns sour, the turkey gets burnt and the mother-in-law stays for longer than planned, well, just don't come running to us for sympathy.