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"In the Sticks"

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In the Sticks

FEBRUARY 2024

Free Copy

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.



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

approved conditionally on 10th August. It was good to see that the majority of public comments were in favour of the development - except for Mr R Hedges who submitted a letter with 11 bullet points detailing his "opposition on the strongest possible grounds" (boo, hiss).



The **Cabman's Shelter**, better known as **BeerHeadZ Nottingham Station**, has changed hands and will now be called the **Brew Tavern** to be run by the team from Brew Cavern (confusing or what?), the craft beer bottle shop in Flying Horse Walk, Nottingham. The indications are that they will stock a selection of both cask and craft beer plus cider. The opening date hasn't yet been released.

It has been reported to "In The Sticks" that the **Old Sawley Brewing Company**, located to the rear of the **White Lion** pub in Sawley, has ceased trading. Thanks to the Manc (via Big Al) for the information.

The Tram Inspector has informed "In The Sticks" that the **Matlock Brewing Company** (aka. **Matlock Wolds Farm Brewery**) has also closed. It appears that Rob Atkin, owner and brewer, has decided to retire and his colleague Ed (surname not known) will start out on a new career in Data Engineering.

It's important to point out that the **Matlock Brewing Company** should not be confused with the **Moot Oak Brewing Company** based in the Red Lion in Matlock but which was formerly known as **Matlock Brewery Ltd**.

More bad news as it has been reported that **North Brewing Co.** (rebranded as simply **North** brewery in November 2023) has filed a Notice of Intention to appoint an administrator to deal with their current

cash-flow problems. The brewery actually expanded production at their Springwell site in Leeds in 2020 and were voted Brewery of the Year by the Brewers Journal in 2023. At the time of writing, the brewery continues to operate and the 8 bars in Leeds operated by them are also unaffected.

Squawk brewery based in Manchester will be ceasing production at the end of March. This is due to the fact that the brewery is situated under the Trans-Pennine railway tracks and the structure requires maintenance which means that the brewery kit must be dismantled and removed for what is likely to be months. A spokesman for the brewery announced that it wasn't economically viable to be closed for so long and so, after 10 years, they have decided to call it a day. The Pelican Taproom in central Manchester is not affected.

On a more positive note, Lloyd Stringer, brewer/owner of **Crich Brew Co.** is doubling capacity at their current location in Crich. Lloyd expects to be using the new kit in mid-February and is hoping to expand the distribution of his **Crich Brew** beers. A Facebook message posted on 31st December hints at what is to come in 2024...

"What a year 2023 was! Lots to look forward to in 2024 - we're more than doubling our brew length next month and have got some great collabs booked in already. Massive thanks to everyone who has helped support our brewing journey so far - your support means a lot and also means we can push forward with new gear, new beers and new adventures! Happy New Year, and thank you".

Beer & Pub News

The **Little Brewing Co.** (formerly Littleover) is moving to a new location behind the Toolstation premises on the Alfreton Road, Derby. They are also hoping to establish a tap room at the new site. Planning permission has been sought for "Change of use from Trade Counter to Microbrewery and ancillary Tap Room" and a decision is pending. 40 Public Comments were submitted through the planning permission portal, all in favour. A Facebook post dated 2nd January also reported that they would be "launching a Little pay-it-forward crowdfunding campaign, where you can buy vouchers to our opening events".

It seems that a new micro-pub, the **Pickled Pear**, will finally open in the pub-free village of Palterton, just outside Bolsover - in fact, according to its new Facebook page, it has already had a soft opening with the hours being from 6.00 pm to 10.00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays only. The official opening is expected to be "hopefully early to mid Feb 2024". The plan to open this micro-pub was originally reported in the Derbyshire press back in July 2023 and the plans were

The **Needlemakers Arms** in Ilkeston, owned by Star Pubs & Bars, is up for sale at £275k. The pub closed in June 2020 when the

licensees handed in their notice but it re-opened with a temporary operator later the same year. In February 2023, Star Pubs & Bars was planning a £200k refurbishment but, after a year, no new tenant has been found. Now where have we heard that before?

Angels Micro Pub

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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

Another pub up for sale is the **Bell Inn**, Cromford, for £475k. The pub has been closed since October 2023.

Andrew Brett at the newly resurrected Mansfield & Ashfield CAMRA Branch contacted "In The Sticks" with the following information...

Mansfield & Ashfield CAMRA are starting a new social event, open to everybody, called "Final Friday @ 5". On the last Friday of each month at, yes, you've guessed it, 5.00 pm, the group will meet at a nominated pub and visit as many others in the local area as can be managed. The first event on 26th January started at the **Picture House**, Sutton-in-Ashfield before moving on to the **FireRock**. The next destination on 23rd February will be Kirkby-in-Ashfield where the group will be meeting at the **Dandy Cock**, and also visiting the **Dog House** and the **Regent**. It would probably be wise to check the M&A Branch web-pages for confirmation before turning up.

Andrew has also arranged a Tap Takeover and Meet The Brewer evening at the **Red Lion**, Ripley with **Aither Brewery** from Mansfield Woodhouse. This will take place on Monday, 26th February at 7.00 pm. Brewer Scott Lawrence will be in attendance to talk through his range of ales and his history in the brewing industry, including his time with **Batemans**.

The top three finalists in the Derby CAMRA POTY (City) competition are reported to be the **Brunswick**, **Flowerpot** and **Smithfield**. The results, along with those for Country POTY and new category, Suburban POTY, will be announced in March (probably).

On 12th January, CAMRA announced that the National POTY for 2023 is the **Tamworth Tap** (in Tamworth, in case anyone was in any doubt) for the 2nd year running. Runners-up in the competition were the **Nelson Arms** (Tonbridge), **Trafalgar Hotel** (Ramsey, Isle of Man) and the **Beer Engine** (Skipton).

Following flooding after Storm Babet in October 2023, the **Hurt Arms** in Ambergate closed yet again and is yet to re-open (if it ever does). The following statement has been posted on the **Hurt Arms** web-site...

"Unfortunately, due to the adverse weather conditions, excessive rain and flooding caused by Storm Babet, The **Hurt Arms** will be closed until further notice".

From 15th January, the **Smithfield** no longer offers a discount to CAMRA members. The sound of wailing and gnashing of teeth can be heard several blocks away.

The next Mansfield & Ashfield CAMRA meeting will be on 8th February (8.00 pm) at the **Forest Lodge**, Edwinstowe.

Contributors: Big Al, Charisma Bypass, Chris P Duck, Jamie Still, the Jedi, the Manc, Tram Inspector, Tweedle Dee



The Dew Drop Inn

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Sat: 12.00-11.00, Sun: 12.00-10.00

Beer Festivals

Some local beer festivals happening in our area this month...

The **Hucknall Beer Festival** will take place at the John Godber Centre on Ogle Street, Hucknall from Thursday 8th to Sunday 11th February. The opening hours are...

Thursday: 6.00 pm
Friday: 11.00 am
Saturday & Sunday: 12 noon.

Contrary to earlier statements, the evening session on the Thursday is no longer a ticketed event and the festival will be open free to the public as on the other three days. 90+ beers & ciders are promised. Hot and cold food will be available courtesy of Peacock Catering on all four days. Local musician Sunny Grace will be playing on the Thursday evening with the Killer Bees performing on Saturday evening from 7.00 pm.

To add extra interest to the festival, the Spyke Golding Shield Challenge will return for a 2nd time in its new format, being awarded to the best new beer produced for and judged at the Hucknall Beer Festival by the public. Each entry is marked by letter (no brewery name given), with full tasting notes plus ABV, and customers can then score the beer. The winner will be announced during the week-end.

The 2nd **Tom Said Annual Beer Festival** will take place from 22nd-24th February with 15 beers being on offer. Please note that the festival will be held at the **Campbell Street Brewing** site on Campbell Street, Belper and **NOT** at the Tom Said micro-pub.

On the same week-end, **Angels Micropub** will be hosting their **Dark Beer Festival** (22nd-25th February) offering a range of 10+ porters, stouts and milds. Expect some strong ones! Ramshackle* will be playing live on the Sunday afternoon from 3.00 pm.

As Tom Soar stated on his Facebook page: "If you needed a reason to come to Belper that week-end, here is your answer".

*A Derbyshire based singing group specialising in traditional and contemporary folk and shanty songs.

This is an early heads-up for the 47th **Loughborough Beer Festival** which will take place from 7th-9th March, this year celebrating the 50th anniversary of Loughborough & North Leicestershire CAMRA (1974-2024). More details in the next issue.



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In The Papers

The Derby Telegraph (and Nottingham Post) dated 4th January, reported that the **Thorn Tree Inn** on the A610 between Codnor and Langley Mill would be sold at auction. The pub, which had its own fish & chip takeaway business, has been closed for about 12 months. The auction will take place on 30th and 31st January and is being managed by Pugh Auctions. The guide price, originally £425k has been dropped to £395k. The blurb from Pugh Auctions states that "the site benefits from uninterrupted countryside views to the rear and could be suitable for re-development subject to any necessary planning consents".

The Nottingham Post (10th January) reported that the **Navigation Brewery** in Nottingham (behind the Trent Navigation pub on Meadow Lane) has ceased trading. The space occupied by the brewery is to be used to expand the Big Shed venue (more seating and eating) which, if reports are to be believed, has proved to be a big success with Nottingham football fans. Reasons cited for the closure include the usual mix of post-

Covid trading difficulties and the rising cost of energy and raw materials.

The Derby Telegraph (24th January) revealed that Derby councillor Martin Repton, in his campaign to get the **Abbey** pub in Darley Abbey re-opened, has joined forces with an unnamed brewing company in a renewed effort to engage with pub owners, **Samuel Smiths Brewery**. A joint letter has been submitted to the brewery suggesting a meeting to discuss "really exciting and positive ideas" to facilitate re-opening, leasing or even selling the property. At the time of going to press, **Samuel Smiths** have not responded.

Pete and Tracey welcome you to

THE RAILWAY

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Live Music at week-ends

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Out & About

Due to a shortage of space, some articles submitted to "In The Sticks" during 2023 could not be included in the **Out & About** section. These include visits to Manchester, New Brighton and Cornwall by Chris P Duck. Also, an account by Carol & Nigel Fox from Huddersfield who covered a fair few miles by train and bus in Derbyshire on a visit last October. A couple of sections from that report appeared in the January issue of "In The Sticks" but the full unexpurgated version, along with CPD's contributions, can be found on the RuRAD web-site (www.dgmhall.me.uk/rurad/).

Chesterfield (Brampton Mile), 6th Apr, 2023

Arriving by Comet bus, we walked up to the Brampton Road, and started with the **Junction**. In here the bar service was excellent and ale quality was really good; I enjoyed **Purity Longhorn IPA** in preference to **Purity Jimbo** or **Bradfield Farmers Blonde**. A very good place with a café bar atmosphere. We then decided to spend some time in the **GBG Rose & Crown** particularly with a choice of ten cask ales. I began with **Tapped Pivni XV** followed by **Portobello Market Porter** then **Brampton Monocled Mutineer**, one of 4 from this **Brampton** run pub. My colleagues Mythical John, Showbiz Steve and Activity Mike tried the **Three Brothers Northern Pale**, **Meanwood Arcibo Message** and **Mallinsons US Blonde** with **Everards Sunchaser** not sampled. This is a top pub with friendly and knowledgeable bar service so it was easy to hang around waiting for other pubs to open.

We could see across the road that the **Britannia** had now opened so we piled in there; I saw **Stones Bitter** on the bar and thought I must have it as it's a blast from the past that I had not seen for years. Not a good choice so I checked it out and it's now brewed by **Molson Coors** which answered my question. They also had **Landlord** and **Farmers Blonde** which would hopefully have been better. We had fortuitously discovered that the **Real Ale Corner** was opening earlier than usual so we made our way to this, the furthest out point on our trip. This had a tap takeover from **Eyam** with their **Mompesson's Calling** (5.5%), **All Fall Down** (6.5%) & **Black Death** (7.0%) all deemed too strong so between us we settled for **Best Bitter** (4.1%) or **Quarantine** (4.5%). Both were very good and served by a genial landlord in a good micro-pub atmosphere*.

Very close by is the **Tap House**, my first visit as I had never been here during opening times. It's a good old traditional pub with an excellent selection of eight cask ales. I had **Firebird Paleface** with the others trying **Durham White Gold**, **Thornbridge Sequoia** and **Whim Red House Ruby Porter**. Other ales here were **Torrside I'm Spartacus** (6.8%) and the more usual **Bass**, **Harvest Pale** and **Landlord**, making this a very worthwhile visit. Back to the **GBG Anchor**, which had now opened for a choice of **Front Row Pause**, **Thornbridge Vivienne**, **Downlands Drive For Lights** or **Landlord**. More great ales partaken here in this developing ale pub.

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Heading back towards town now we briefly entered the **Crafty Dog** but it had no cask ales as opposed to the ten advertised so a sharp exit here. The **Tramway Tavern**, another **Brampton** pub had a downbeat barman which made it fairly uninviting here, although the beer was OK. I always find it most disappointing that some bar staff fail to offer a cheerful welcome to their clientele - they either need a different job or get a kick up the you know what. The four **Brampton** ales included **Terminus**, not seen before with **Ben's Wellington**, **Salamander Brazen Bull** and **Ashover Belma** as interesting guests plus the regular **Everards Tiger**. One of these was reluctantly withdrawn by the barman with **Shadow Bridge Standard** the replacement.

In conversation earlier we had discovered that the former **Alma Inn**, closed for some

while, was re-opening on the day of our visit as the **Brampton Social Club**. It was very busy on opening day as you would expect with a friendly welcome and a couple of cask ales, **Brampton Golden Bud** and **Oakham Citra** which were decent enough. Plenty of TV sport screens but difficult to assess other attributes due to the crowd. Our last call on the way back was the **GBG Chesterfield Alehouse** which as usual held some interesting ales. I had an excellent **Scarborough Stout** with other ales being **Stockport West Coast IPA** and a couple from **Silver Brewhouse** with their **Independence** and **Funky Hop Donkey - Big Funky**. On this occasion we ran out of time for the **GBG Neptune** and **GBG Chesterfield Arms** but including those two would make a very worthwhile trip for another time. **Chris P Duck**.

*The Real Ale Corner changed hands in July 2023 but hopefully, the quality of ale and service have been retained.

April and the team welcome you to the

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Real Pub

Bedford, 5th Jan, 2023

On this trip, organised by Pothole Ady, we initially got off the train at Wellingborough in Northants to visit the **GBG Little R' Ale House** which is conveniently situated just a few metres from the station exit. This award winning micro-pub is in an old railway building and operated by Mary who was a most welcoming host, especially as we arrived just before opening time. There were 5 cask ales available with 3 coming from the fairly local **Tring Brewery**. Between us we tried the excellent **Brook Bitter** and **Mansion Mild** but not the 7.2% **Death Or Glory**. **Hammer Head** is a subsidiary of **Stockport Brewery** and their **Your Hammered DDH IPA** was my best drink of the day with **Dow Bridge Acris** completing the range. Well worth getting off the train for, and a first for us all was that our host was a crocodile farmer from Zimbabwe - you don't meet many of those in a micro-pub.

We were soon in Bedford, a place I had never visited before and our first call was the **GBG Wellington Arms** and the traditional landlord advised us that it was the best beer pub in town - and he was later proved correct. Not knowing what was to follow we would have stayed longer. I had **Roman Way Barbarian** with others being **Nethergate Suffolk County**, **Rother Valley Brew Co Valley Bitter** and two from **Vale** - **Black Beauty** and **Gravitas**. Loads

of old brewery memorabilia throughout, that contributed to a great pub.

We next visited **Beerfly** which was a keg beer bar and bottle shop where I believe we all drank the same **Left Handed Giant Sky Above** (4.5%) because it was the weakest and thus cheapest. Bizarrely you could only order in third pint or two third pint measures although the glasses were also lined for half pints. As usual this type of place creates little atmosphere and we did not linger. Next stop was the **GBG Castle** which was a big disappointment - none us wanted **Courage Directors**, **Adnams Southwold Bitter** or **Young's London Original** so we all had the **Brewpoint Anchorman**. This was very poor and some could not drink it all, so would almost certainly have been better with the national ales. **Brewpoint** is actually what was formerly **Charles Wells** but in a new brewery and on this evidence leaves a lot to be desired. Very close by is the **GBG Three Cups**, a **Greene**

King pub formerly operated by **Kelchner Brewery** which is presumably why it made **GBG** but since they left, it reverted to **GK** and with only two national ales on offer we did not even bother to go in.

A long walk through housing took us to the **GBG White Horse** which appeared to be mainly an eatery run again by **GK**. A disappointing beer selection with just **London Pride** and **Adnams Lighthouse**, although to be fair the former was decent quality. Not too far away was the **GBG Devonshire Arms**, another traditional locals pub offering five cask ales. Some of us were tempted by the **Brewpoint Anchorman** to find out what it should taste like after the previous disastrous experience and it was significantly better but still not a great drink. The other ales were fairly predictable **London Pride**, **Tribute**, **Ghost Ship** and **Landlord**. A decent back street boozier compared to the last three but we needed to move on, and ordered

a large taxi to take us to the **Brewpoint Taproom**. This is a very large industrial unit housing the brewery, various food offerings and a range of expensive merchandise. The long bar featured just two cask ales, including their infamous **Anchorman** again plus **Santa Banter Red Ale** which I had, along with a couple of keg ales from the plethora available. My keg choices were **Genesis Bedford Stout** and **Crafty Seadog** which was an 8.5% Helles Bock to finish off with. Personally I am not a big fan of these large brewery complexes which lack pub atmosphere but it obviously suits some people. There was another **GBG** pub which was a bit too far out for us and also a 'Spoons, also in the **GBG** which may have had some different ales but from this trip I would only recommend the **Wellington** and the **Devonshire**; not forgetting the excellent micro-pub on Wellingborough Station. **Chris P Duck**.

Beer Festival Diary - Near and Not so Near

- 1st-5th Feb. The Mallard Beer Festival. Worksop Station, Worksop
8th-11th Feb. Hucknall Beer Festival. The John Godber Centre, Hucknall, Nottingham. 90+ ales, ciders
15th-17th Feb. GBBF Winter Beer Festival. Burton Town Hall, Burton-on-Trent
22nd-24th Feb. Tom Said 2nd Annual Beer Festival. Campbell Street Brewing, Belper. 15 ales
22nd-25th Feb. Angels Micropub Dark Beer Festival. 26 Market Place, Belper. 10+ ales
1st-2nd Mar. Indie Beer Feast Craft Beer Festival. Trafalgar Warehouse, 120 Trafalgar Street, Sheffield
1st-3rd Mar. The Smithfield Derby 7th Birthday Weekender. Celebration Beer From Urban Chicken To Feature
6th-17th Mar. Wetherspoons Real Ale & Cider Festival. All Wetherspoon Pubs. www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk
7th-9th Mar. Magna Real Ale & Music Festival. Magna Science Adventure Centre, Rotherham. 250+ ales
7th-9th Mar. 47th Loughborough Beer Festival. Polish Club, True Lovers Walk off William St, Loughborough. 60+ ales

-
- 31st Jan-3rd Feb. 15th Colchester Winter Beer Festival. Colchester Arts Centre, Church St, Colchester
1st-3rd Feb. Bent & Bongs Beer Bash. Atherton Roller Rink, Atherton, Manchester. 60 ales
1st-3rd Feb. Tewkesbury Beer Festival. The Watson Hall, Barton Street, Tewkesbury. 70+ ales, cider & perry
2nd-3rd Feb. 35th Dorchester Beerex. Corn Exchange, High St West, Dorchester. 80 ales
2nd-3rd Feb. 14th Elysian Beer Festival. The Maltings, Ship Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire. 75 ales, 20 ciders
15th-17th Feb. Liverpool Beer Festival. Lutyens Crypt, Metropolitan Cathedral, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool
16th-17th Feb. Bath Beer Festival. Widcombe Social Club, Widcombe Hall, Bath. 30 ales
16th-17th Feb. Salisbury Winter Beer Festival. Salisbury Guild Hall, Market Place, Salisbury. 24 ales, 5 ciders
29th Feb-2nd Mar. Bradford Beer Festival. Victoria Hall, Saltaire, Bradford. 110 ales, cider/perry
1st-2nd Mar. Gosport Winter Beer Festival. Thorngate Halls, Bury Road, Gosport. 40+ ales + cider/perry

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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welcome you to the...*
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