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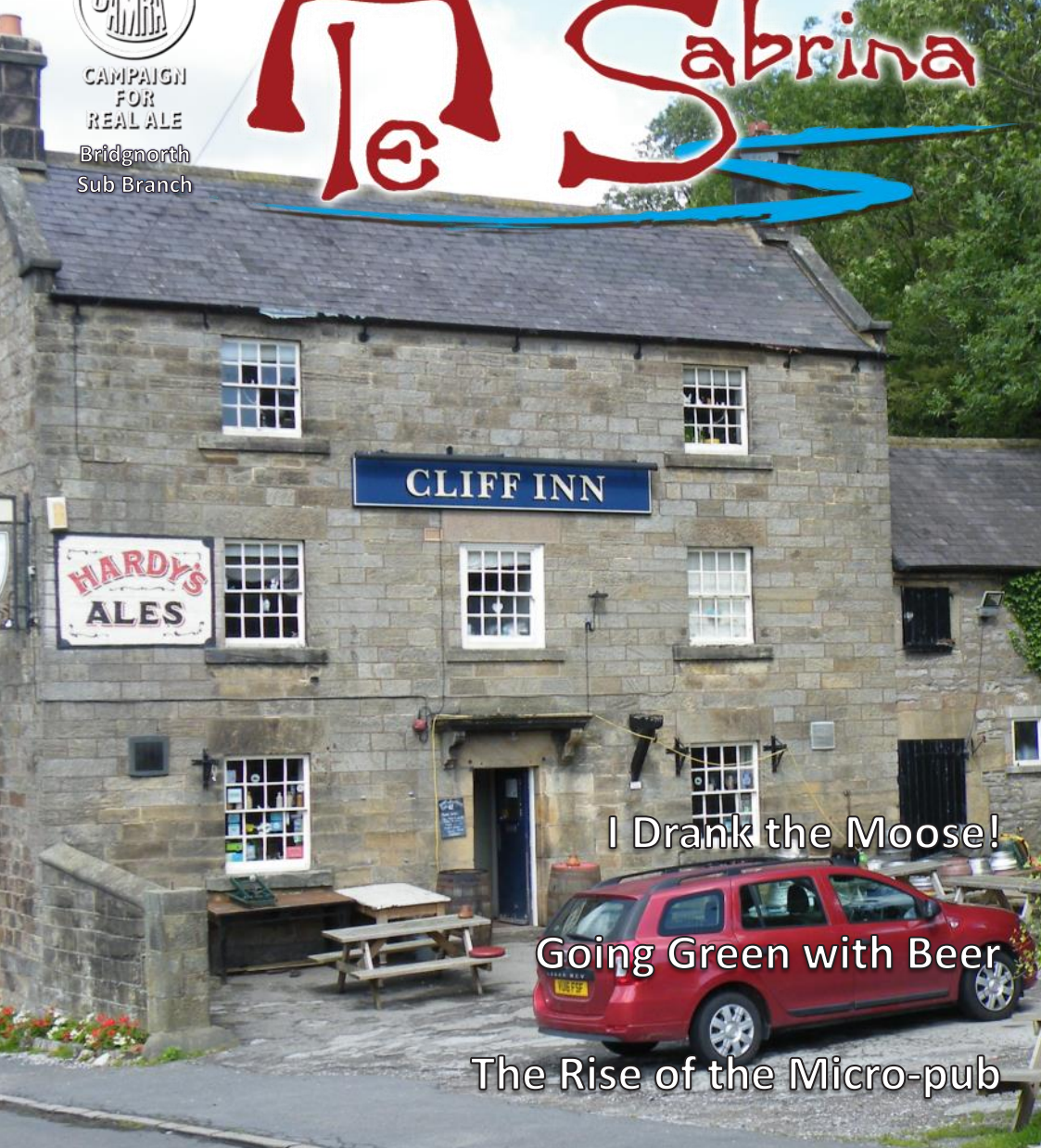


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The Rise of the Micro-pub

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HOLDEN'S

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## Editor's Comments

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Ale Sabrina. It's been a mixed summer weather-wise, a nice start in May and after that, a mixture of rain, heat and cold weather.

I am compiling these notes whilst sitting on a bench in Crich Tramway Museum. The sun is shining and I am watching the trams go by - very relaxing. I am waiting for the Cliff Inn, situated just outside the gates of the museum, to open while Janet is inside the Exhibition Hall operating the model trams with the Manchester Model Tram Group. We were here for a long weekend with a group of friends from the Railwayman's Arms and we stayed at the Premier Inn at Ripley. After we had checked in, we met our friends from Manchester in the bar. Unfortunately there was only an average pint of Doom Bar on offer. So we all decided to walk into town to find some more pubs!

After a short walk through the woods and housing estate to Butterley Hill, our first stop was the Nags Head. A nice pint of Bass at £2.80 a pint. As it was Thursday we decided to go to the Red Lion (Wetherspoons) for something to eat, good choice from my point of view as it was curry night! Curry was OK but a lot of the food was below Spoons standard. We then did a tour of Ripley pubs, sorry to say I did not take notes as I did not contemplate doing an article of Ripley pubs.

The Friday was spent setting up the model trams, quite a big job as it was a large layout! It was a wet day so good to be inside! After finishing the construction it was back to the hotel for a wash and brush up. Three of us decided to walk into town (in the rain) and we stopped at the first pub we came to The Talbot (again on Butterley Hill) a lucky find with eight handpumps all serving excellent beer, friendly staff in no rush to throw us out, so we left about 12:30, leaving the locals to carry on!

Saturday, as I said earlier, was spent at the museum with Janet operating trams and me walking around taking photos, sitting in the sun to start this article. I had a pint in the Red Lion (the museum pub, all beers straight from the cask) then after the museum closed, back to Ripley and another town pub crawl. We did the same on the Sunday before we turned in for the night as we left early on Monday to return to Bridgnorth.

Fast forward from early August to early September - I am sitting outside The Railwayman's Arms, watching CAMRA members erect all the equipment for the first Bridgnorth Beer Festival since 2015. As I stood down from festival activities after the 2015 event it was good to sit back and see the others doing all the work! Looks like it could be a good festival with 61 beers and 10 ciders and perries. Eleanor has promised me an article which should be with me before we go to press.

Cheers.



**Bill Sturt**  
Editor of Ale Sabrina



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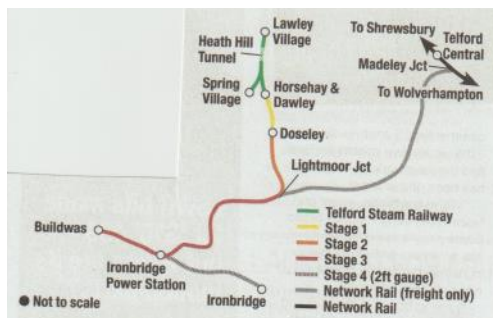
## Beer Days Out - *Imbibing the Ales in Ironbridge*

By Steve James

**A**le Sabrina takes its name from the Roman name for the River Severn. Just nine miles north of Bridgnorth along the River Severn lies the historic town of Ironbridge. This is effectively the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, where Abraham Darby perfected the technique of smelting iron with coke, allowing cast iron to be produced more cheaply. It is also the home of the Iron Bridge, dating from 1779, the first single-span cast iron bridge in the world. Originally designed by Thomas Pritchard, it was constructed by Abraham Darby III. It has recently been thoroughly repaired and refurbished in a £3.6m scheme by English Heritage and reopened in 2019.

Until 1966, the town was connected to Kidderminster, Hartlebury and Shrewsbury by the Severn Valley GWR railway line, now preserved as a heritage railway from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster. There are tentative plans to reopen the line north from Ironbridge to Telford as a commuter/tourist railway, linked to the Telford Steam Railway, as part of plans to redevelop the former power station site. The wider Ironbridge Gorge area is protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is home to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. The town contains several historic pubs and a recently-opened micro-

pub, so it was time to see what it could offer in terms of beer-hunting.



To reach Ironbridge, we caught the No.8 bus from Telford bus station, which runs hourly (but not on Sundays). Our first port-of-call was the **Tontine Hotel**, a Grade 2 listed building in The Square, originally built to accommodate visitors to the new Iron Bridge and refurbished in 2018. A pity that the limited range of beers on offer did not match the character of the hotel. Thankfully, just opposite and also overlooking the iconic Iron Bridge, is the **Coracle** micro-pub. Opened in 2018 by two beer enthusiasts who “wanted to create the type of pub we’d like to drink in”, the small bar is in the front room of the pub, opening into a room at the back. Normally, four cask ales are available, along with eight keg taps and a well-stocked fridge with over 100 bottles of craft beer. We





sampled Ilkley Summer Ale, Mobberley's A Beer Called Clive and Electric Bear's Inspector Remorse porter, all in excellent condition.



We then walked down the High Street to the Wharfage, where there are three historic pubs. First, the **White Hart**, another Grade 2 listed building, offering three beers from the Marstons stable, but which focuses more on meals than beer. As does the **Malthouse**, with four draught beers, which used to include its own Ironbridge Bitter. Next door, the **Swan Inn** claims to be the oldest pub in Ironbridge and is also Grade 2 listed. It also offers three beers from the Marstons stable along with a few craft beers.

We then decided to return to The Square and walk to the Jackfield bridge. Here, in Jockey Bank, we found the **Horse & Jockey**, a cosy little pub only open in the evenings, serving food and two draught beers. Close by is the **Golden Ball**, another small pub, offering beers from Hobsons and Wye Valley. Along Waterloo Road, we called in to the **Bird in Hand**, another Marstons pub, followed by the **Robin Hood Inn**, an historic pub offering several beers from Holdens

(Dudley), of which we sampled their excellent Black Country Bitter.



Finally, we couldn't miss the chance to visit the **All Nations** in Coalport Road on the way to Madeley. This is one of CAMRA's original home-brew pubs and is still brewing its own beer 'round the back'. This friendly pub offers its own All Nations beer, along with a couple of guest ales from local breweries, such as Gorgeous, Hobsons and Ludlow. Home-produced eggs are sold at the bar from the hens in the pub garden and Monday night is time for the popular pub quiz. It is also well-placed for visiting the Blists Hill part of the Ironbridge Museum. After our brief visit to the All Nations, we returned to Telford on the No.19 bus.

So Ironbridge is an interesting town to visit, with a wealth of historic features and a good range of beers. But watch the bus times, since they can be a bit irregular!





# Beer Destinations - *Eau de Cologne and Alt Bier in Dusseldorf*

By Steve James

We recently undertook a rail-based tour of Germany, visiting several breweries and specialist bars, including in Cologne and Dusseldorf.

## *Eau de Cologne*

No, not perfume, but the local beer, **Kölsch**. This beer is unusual, since it is top-fermented with bespoke ale yeast and a proportion of wheat malt. It is then conditioned at cold temperatures, like lager, to a strength of around 4.8%. This style of beer started to appear in the Cologne area in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but was not called Kölsch until 1918. Since 1997, it has had protected status and is only brewed within 30 miles of Cologne to the recipe dictated by the Kölsch Konvention, as defined by the Köln Brewery Association in 1986. This bright and golden beer is usually served in a small narrow 20cl glass (*Stange*) at between 6-8°C, by a waiter (*Köbes*) who carries up to 12 *Stangen* in a *Kranz* – a circular tray. The *Köbes* immediately replaces an empty *Stange* with a full one, marking a tick on the beer mat. If you don't want a refill, you place a beermat on top of the glass, etiquette you need to know in every Kölsch bar!



*Brauerei zur Malzmühl*

We started our tour at the **Brauerei zur Malzmühle**, established in 1853, which brews over 50,000hl of beer/year. The Mühlen Kölsch was served direct from a wooden barrel on the bar. We next called into the **Bierhaus en d'r Salzgass** for a glass of Pfaffgen Kölsch, brewed since 1883. This one was slightly more fruity and the nearest to real ale. There are around a dozen Kölsch brew-pubs in Cologne and all have to join the syndicate of approved brewers. Our third brew-pub, **Brauerei zum Pfaffers**, was run by the brother of the previous bar, but he wasn't allowed to join the syndicate! So he brews a slightly darker and tastier top-fermented beer in a similar style. Next was **Peter's Brauhaus**, for another quick Kölsch served direct from the cask, followed by **Brauhaus Sion** for another. Finally, we visited the **Gaffel am Dom** brewery restaurant in the shadow of the famous cathedral. Here, it was death by bratwurst – a huge bratwurst washed down with a couple of glasses of Gaffel Kölsch! And on the way home, don't forget to sample a glass of Dom Kölsch in the small bar at Cologne railway station.

## *Hitting the heights of Altbier in Dusseldorf*

Dusseldorf is the capital and second largest city in the North Rhine-Westphalia state of Germany. It lies at the confluence of the Rivers Rhine and Dussel (hence its name) and is the focal point of the Rhine-Rhur industrial region. The city is renowned as a business, financial and educational city, with fashion and trade fairs, as well as for influencing modern electronic music (Kraftwerk were based here). But the Altstadt is also known as the 'longest bar in the world', with over 300 bars and clubs, each bar counter almost connecting to the one next door!

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However, we were here to sample the Altbier, which originated in the town around 1838, when the Schumacher brewery opened. Altbier (old-style) is a top-fermented hoppy red ale, with a copper/dark brown colour and a strength of around 4.6%. It is fermented at moderate temperatures using an ale yeast, but then matured at colder temperatures, which gives it a crisp and cleaner taste, more akin to lager than pale ale. A seasonal variety (*Sticke Alt* – meaning secret) is much stronger in taste and strength, as well as being much darker. And surprisingly, most of the brew-pubs serve the Altbier in 25cl glasses direct from genuine wooden barrels on the bars! The waiters here as known as *Köbes* (as in Cologne), and constantly replace your glass with full ones.



There are eight brewpubs in Dusseldorf who brew their own Altbier on the premises and our tour took in most of them. Many of them are near to each other in the old town. After arriving by train, we started our guided tour at the **Kurzer** brewpub in Kurzstrasse, the newest Altbier brew-pub in the town, where we sampled their Kurzer Altbier. We then continued to the **Brauerei Fuchschen** in Ratingerstrasse for another Altbier before visiting the oldest brewery, **Schumacher**, in

Oststrasse, to sample their original version. There is another Schumacher outlet at the Goldener Kessel in Bolkerstrasse.

We then sampled similar brews from the **Uerige Obergarige Hausbrauerei**, followed by the **Brauerei Zum Schlüssel** in Bolkerstrasse for their original Schlüssel Altbier, to wash down our dinner of roast pork and plums. We then visited the oldest brewery/restaurant in the town, **Brauerei Zum Sciffchen** in Hafenstrasse, complete with the blue-aproned waiters who serve the typical Altbier. Then to **Brauhaus Joh Albrecht** in Niderkasselerstrasse for a glass of Johann Albrecht Alt, **Zum Uerige**, in Bergerstrasse, with its fine stained glass and wooden-panelled taphouse and excellent Weizen (wheat) beer, the **Brauhaus Mohker** to sample their altbier, and finally, the **Alter Bahnhof** for their Gulasch Alt. And no visit to Dusseldorf could be complete without sampling the local spirit, Killepitsch herb liquer, flavoured with fruits, berries, herbs and spices, but which to me tasted much like cough medicine!

*Bier und prost – Beers and cheers!*





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# I Drank The Moose! Pints In and Around Porthmadog

By Steve James

Porthmadog is a small coastal town at the northern end of Cardigan Bay in North Wales. Formerly a busy seaport, shipping thousands of tons of slates from nearby quarries to English industrial cities and abroad, it is now a popular tourist and sailing destination. It is also home to three narrow gauge railways (Ffestiniog, Welsh Highland and Welsh Highland Heritage railways) and, most importantly, the Purple Moose Brewery. We recently decided to see what the town and other nearby places could offer in the way of beer.

After a 4.5 hour-long train journey from Birmingham, we were certainly more than ready for a drink! Luckily, there was a bar on the platform at Porthmadog railway station (**Y Stesh** – The Station Inn), which offered a passable pint of Purple Moose Elderflower Ale, but we wanted more choice. So we walked along the road into the town centre to find The Royal Sportsman Hotel. Here, **Gelerts Bar** offered two more Purple Moose beers – Glaslyn and Snowdonia golden ales,



which were very drinkable. Further along the main street, we found the Purple Moose brewery shop. So far, it was all Purple Moose! We arranged a brewery trip for the following day and continued along the main street to **The Australia** pub, dating from the 1850's. Guess what, this has been refurbished and reopened in March 2017 as the Purple Moose brewery tap....and it offered all the beers brewed by the brewery! In addition to those we had already sampled were Madog's Ale, the splendid Dark Side of the Moose dark ale, A Pint of Two Halves and Gold Coast golden ales, Antlered IPA amber ale, Chocolate Moose stout and Mwsh Kolsch beer. We were certainly 'moosed out'!

The next day, we visited the **Bragdy Mws Pws** (Purple Moose brewery) in Madoc Street for a tour of the brewery (£7.50; Wednesdays). This 40-barrel microbrewery started brewing in June 2005 and has won over 90 awards for its draught and bottled beers. There is a core range of 4-5 beers, supplemented by a range of craft and seasonal beers. The brewery sample of Dark Side of the Moose was spot on!





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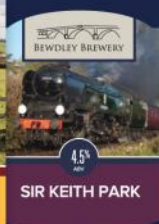
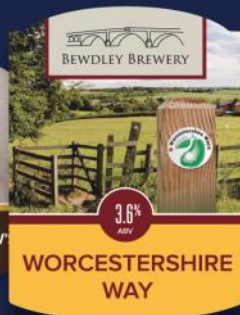
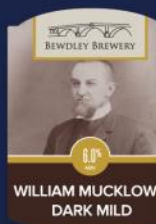
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We had booked a train ticket for a journey on the Welsh Highland Railway for the early afternoon. After leaving Porthmadog, we steamed through the awe-inspiring Aberglaslyn Pass, where the railway passes along a cliff edge through tunnels alongside the Afon Glaslyn. Beyond Beddgelert, the summit of Snowdon was clear to see and we left the train at Waunfawr to visit **Snowdonia Parc**, the home of **Bragdy Eryri** (Snowdonia Brewery), opened in 2012. Here, we sampled Carmen Sutra pale ale, Theodore Stout, Aur Eryri Gold and Capital T red ale. This CAMRA award-winning pub also has a good food menu and a campsite.

Back in Porthmadog, we found that **Spooners Bar** on the platform at the Ffestiniog railway station at the end of The Cob was certainly worth visiting. Yes, Purple Moose was available, but then so was Banks' Mild and Jennings Bitter! But there were also

beers from Bragdy'r Gogarth (Great Orme Brewery), including Welsh Gold, Celtica, Welsh Black, Red Dragon and a tasty Snowdonian Craft Lager, along with Bragdy Lieu's Bendigeidfran (named after a mythical Welsh giant), Forza from Heavy Industry Brewing, and newly-brewed Wrexham Lager, all available to wash down the excellent food.

The next day, we went off by train along the superb coastal route over Barmouth Bridge to Tywyn for a journey on the Tallyllyn narrow-gauge steam railway, the world's first preserved railway, opened in 1865. Here, in the **King's Café** at Wharf Station, we found beers from another Welsh brewery – Cwrw Cader, based in Dolgellau. We sampled Aur Cader & Cwrw Cregennan golden ales and Cwrw Coch Red Bandit, a strong red ale. Bottles of a special Tallyllyn Ale were also available, along with The Centennials (Purple Moose), a special limited edition beer brewed to commemorate the centenaries of both the RAF and the steam locomotive 'Douglas'.

So, this was an interesting beer-hunting tour which revealed several new Welsh microbreweries, so that we weren't 'moosed out' all the time!

*Cwrw a iechyd-da - Beers and cheers!*



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## Thirty Reasons to Join CAMRA

By Steve James

CAMRA's previous membership scheme had a strong Wetherpoons' incentive to join CAMRA with its £20-worth of vouchers giving 50p off a pint in every one of their pubs. However, on 1 July 2019, CAMRA launched a new voucher scheme for new and renewing CAMRA members. This is wholly a CAMRA initiative. Whilst coming under the Real Ale Discount Scheme umbrella, it is a bigger and better voucher scheme which is hoped to increase the discount access to over 1,550 pubs nationwide. This is in addition to the Real Ale Discount Scheme where around 3,500 pubs offer great discounts to membership card-carrying CAMRA members.

So what are the essential differences? Well, the latest CAMRA voucher scheme offers £30 -worth of vouchers redeemable at over 1,550 pubs. They will run from the membership start and end date. The scheme not only includes all Wetherspoons pubs, but now also includes Brains, Stonegate, Castle Rock and Amber Taverns pubs, along with City Taverns, Slug & Lettuce, Walkabout and other smaller pub chains. Now that Stonegate have taken over Enterprise Inns, this may increase the number of eligible pubs even more. All existing Wetherspoons vouchers will still be valid during the next 12 months. Other pub chains may join the scheme in the future. If a pub or pub chain shows an interest in the scheme, they should contact [CAMRAvouchers@camra.org.uk](mailto:CAMRAvouchers@camra.org.uk). The agreement runs for a minimum of 12 months and can be applied to any real ale, cider or perry products. However, CAMRA does not allow members to approach or encourage individual pubs to join the scheme. Window stickers and point-of-sale material should promote the availability of the scheme and

discount at individual pubs. New vouchers will be sent to each member when they join or renew their membership.

Another key recruitment initiative will be aimed at beer festivals, with new advertising and promotional material being made available to organisers and branches. However, members will need to show their CAMRA membership card when using the vouchers in pubs. So, there are now 30 good reasons to join or renew your membership with CAMRA!

Further details are available at [CAMRAvouchers@camra.org.uk](mailto:CAMRAvouchers@camra.org.uk) or 01727-798440.



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## Rail and Ale - Gloucestershire/Warwickshire Railway

By Steve James

The Gloucestershire/Warwickshire Railway (GWSR) is a heritage railway, which runs between Broadway and Cheltenham Racecourse and has recently been extended to Broadway, offering a round trip of some 28 miles. Currently, it only runs in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, but has longer-term ambitions for a northern extension to Honeybourne and possibly Stratford-upon-Avon. Each May, the railway and the local CAMRA branch hold a popular 'Ale and Steam' weekend, which we decided to investigate.



Arriving at **Toddington** station, we found the popular station bar offering 13 cask ales, many from the Wessex area, including Hopback's Taiphoo, a light fruity 4.2% ale, which was the first to run out. In the nearby village, not far from the railway station, is **The Pheasant Inn**, a recent addition to the Donnington's estate of Cotswold pubs. This warm and friendly pub offers three beers from this historic Victorian model brewery, including Donnington BB, Gold & SBA beers. It offers good pub food and is dog-friendly. The brewery has also recently published 'Donnington Way Pub Walks', a real ale trail around its Cotswold pubs.



We then travelled on the train to **Winchcombe**, where the bar here offered 27 beers, including several dark beers and the top-selling Cotswold Lion Woolpack, a 4% golden ale. Draught ciders were also available, including the popular Stanton Priors Tipple. A short walk from the railway station into the Saxon town of Winchcombe will find a handful of good pubs in the High Street. The **White Hart** was formerly a coaching inn, where Goff's Tournament is regularly available. The **Lion Inn** is another 15<sup>th</sup> century coaching inn, where we found Prescott Grand Prix and North Cotswold Windrush Ale available. The **Plasterers Arms**, another 15<sup>th</sup> century inn, usually offers Timothy Taylors Landlord and Wye Valley, whilst the **Corner Cupboard** in Gloucester Road usually has Wye Valley, Doom Bar and Wickwar BOB. **Rosies Bar** is not only a modern bar/grill/coffee shop, but also offers draught beers from Hook Norton and Stanway breweries.

The railway currently terminates at **Cheltenham Racecourse**, which is some distance from the town centre. However, local buses do run from the Racecourse roundabout into the town centre (but check times). The local CAMRA branch has

# GREAT SHROPSHIRE BEERS







By Steve James

published a guide to the pubs in and around the town centre. These include the **Sandford Park Alehouse**, **Old Restoration Smokehouse** and **Strand** in High Street, **Whittle Taps** in Regent Street, Wetherspoon's **Moon Under Water** in Bath Road, **Kemble Brewery Inn** in Fairview Street, **Cheltenham Motor Club** in Upper Park Street and the **Jolly Brewmaster** in Painswick Road. There's even a bar (**The Aviator**) at the local airport, serving four draught beers.

At its northern end, the railway currently terminates at **Broadway**, where the original station has been painstakingly recreated, with careful attention to detail. The picture postcard village of Broadway lies about a mile from the railway station and has many up-market bars and restaurants. The **Swan Hotel** is a typical Cotswold stone pub with good value bar meals, with Sharp's Doom Bar and Purity UBU as regular beers. At the nearby **Horse & Hound**, a pint of Hook Norton Old Hooky is usually available. And if you wish to go a little more up-market, you'll probably find Goff's Joustier, Wickwar BOB and Hook Norton ales at the **Broadway Hotel**. This hotel dates from 1575 and has an award-winning brasserie with a minstrel's gallery, along with the CAMRA award-winning Jockey Bar. The **Crown & Trumpet** on the road to Snowhill dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and has plenty of Flowers Brewery memorabilia. It often serves local beers, including Prescott Chequered Flag and Stanway Broadway Artists Ale and has just celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> year of inclusion in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.



So, the Gloucester-Warwickshire Railway offers a good day's beer-hunting, even if there isn't a beer festival on!



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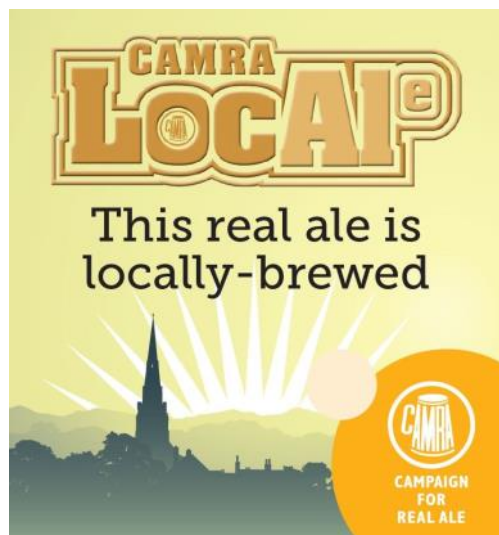
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You may be reading this in a local pub where one or more of the handpump clips has a 'topper' with the design below and are wondering what it means.



LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs and clubs who endeavour to regularly stock at least one locally brewed real ale and serve it in a consistently good condition. This not only reduces the number of 'beer miles' from brewery to pub cellar, but also reflects growing consumer demand for quality local produce and increasing awareness of environmental issues. LocAle supports local brewers and local identity and pride, letting us celebrate what makes each locality different. As you travel around the country, you can appreciate different types and styles of beers from local breweries in different regions. Since there are now more local breweries than ever, there is an ever increasing diversity of beer styles for drinkers to sample in any region.

Launched in 2007, CAMRA branches around the country will award accreditation to pubs that regularly stock at least one real ale from a local brewery and serve it in good condition. The pubs can then advertise their support for the scheme by posting a window sticker in their pubs. The LocAle concept is fully in line with the Sustainable Communities Act, which was also enacted when CAMRA's national campaign started.

The concept emerged from the Nottinghamshire branch of CAMRA, following the takeover and subsequent closure of the local Hardy & Hansons brewery by Greene King. Beer was being brewed in Suffolk and transported many miles to Nottinghamshire; not only was the beer no longer local, but the number of miles it travelled was not friendly to the environment. The transport of food and drink (including the initial raw materials) accounts for 25% of all road goods traffic and breweries are endlessly proliferating their 'beer miles', with beer travelling long distances throughout the country. The LocAle scheme emerged into a 'support local beers produced by your neighbourhood brewer', a campaigning tool which has now been adopted by over 125 CAMRA branches throughout the country. The definition of what constitutes a LocAle is determined by local CAMRA branches.

There are several benefits of stocking locally-sourced real ale in local pubs. Pubs can attract more customers through their doors, including visitors and enable them to enjoy locally-produced beers. Consumers will be able to enjoy greater choice and diversity of beers. Local brewers are supported, with





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By Steve James

increased sales and less distance to deliver their beers. Some local breweries (eg. Black Country Ales) even sponsor their own real-ale trails, focusing on promoting local beers. The local economy is supported as more money is generated and spent in the local area and fewer 'beer miles' have less impact on the environment. And you've often heard the phrase, "that beer doesn't travel well"!

To qualify, firstly, a pub must endeavour to always have available at least one real ale from a local brewery. It doesn't have to be the same beer or from the same brewery, but local beers should be a permanent feature and not an occasional guest appearance. Secondly, that local beer has to be well-kept at all times. Pubs are usually nominated by CAMRA members who know the pub well and can confirm that at least one of its real ales is from a local brewery and is always kept well. The pub also has to be willing to take part in the LocAle campaign and be listed by CAMRA as a 'LocAle' pub. A list of LocAle pubs appears on most CAMRA branch web-sites and in magazines, indicating those which regularly serve real ale from local breweries. Promotional material is available from local CAMRA branches. In the Ale Sabrina area, there are over 40 LocAle pubs the Bridgnorth area, 17 in the Telford & Shropshire area and five in the Market Drayton area. All are listed towards the end of this edition of Ale Sabrina.

You may ask, well, what counts as local? This may have a different concept to someone living in a city or town than those living in rural areas. Around 25-30 miles seems a reasonable distance in most cases.

Real ales from national or regional breweries will qualify if the distance the beer has to travel is within this range.

So, if you want to contribute to the "green" agenda, help the environment and support local businesses, visit a "LocAle" pub and sample their locally-brewed beers. And, who knows, you may also receive a CAMRA discount!

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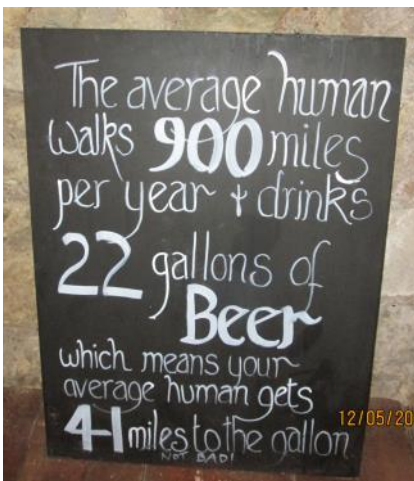
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## A Few 'Interesting' Signs

Submitted by John Morgan



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## CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme

Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_

Mem. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Pub \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

GBG County Area \_\_\_\_\_ Score 0 - 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Beer \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

## CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme

Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_

Mem. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Pub \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

GBG County Area \_\_\_\_\_ Score 0 - 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Beer \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

## CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme

Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_

Mem. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Pub \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

GBG County Area \_\_\_\_\_ Score 0 - 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Beer \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

## CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme

Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_

Mem. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Pub \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

GBG County Area \_\_\_\_\_ Score 0 - 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Beer \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional)

### 0. No cask ale available.

**1. Poor.** Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.

**2. Average.** Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

**3. Good.** Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

**4. Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition.

**5. Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.



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## Poking Around Plovdiv

By Bob Newton

Plovdiv is Bulgaria's second largest town after Sofia, the capital, but as it's the 'City of Culture 2019' - there is a lot going on in the arts department. Hearing of a beer festival - we flew there from Stansted with Ryanair (I know, but they are the only carrier serving Plovdiv so what can you do?) and were about to get ripped off by the taxi drivers waiting at the airport when a Bulgarian guy who was on the flight came to our rescue, by telling the gangster taxi drivers to sod off and calling a local taxi firm for us. Saving between £20-£30 we proceeded to our hotel, eager to spend it on beers, but the hotel beer was a naff lager so we walked into town - miles and miles (advise- get a taxi, they're cheap) and found a bar in the Old Town called 'Fabric'. It was just about to close, but we could have one beer 'if we were quick'. Three rounds later, we staggered out thanking all the saints that we were able to find this one pub open on a warm Wednesday night, drinking a very acceptable IPA.

The next day found us in the Old Town again walking up the longest pedestrianized street in Europe, past the statue of 'Milo' the children's friend who was so beloved that when he died, they built a statue of him (it's good luck to rub his knees). Walking on and finding a Roman forum, stadium and amphitheatre (where we watched an opera called 'La Forza del Destino' by Verdi) and of course a few bars. Try 'Temple Bar' - an old-fashioned drinking den with many local bottled beers and a couple on tap. Further up this street we come to the 'creative district' called Kapana - a bit like 'The Lanes' in Brighton, full of trendy places but a bit shabby here and there. This was where the

beer festival was being held, in a small street just off the main drag, only about 10 bars but all different and eager to share their beer knowledge with you.

It was organised by a local pub called 'Cat & Mouse' 14 *Hristo Dyukmedzhiev Street* and if you go in you will find a great variety of beers both draught and bottled. Nearby is 'Skaptobara' 24 *Yoakim Gruev Steet*. Another great bar but this one specialises in gourmet burgers, huge things with local beef, fresh never frozen and chips to die for. Further afield, go west towards the Dondukov Gardens and found 'Hills Bar' and 'Craft Bar', both in Betoven Street and well worth a visit but beware they are all closed on Sundays. On top of the hill overlooking the amphitheatre (where we saw the Opera) is another bar with seating outside appropriately called 'Opera Bar' and they have a fridge full of wonderful bottles. One soon gets tired of the ubiquitous draught lager on offer everywhere, but go to the Beer Museum on Kapitan Raycho Street and you will find the brand new local brewhouse and restaurant of 'Kabinitza Beers' offering five draught beers of distinction and food to match. My advice is to go there and find your own way around, there are three Tourist Information Offices in the city if you need help and the locals are very friendly (not a poisoned umbrella in sight).

Plovdiv will only be European City of Culture once, but vibrant, friendly and interesting it will always be.



# The Rise of the Micro-pub – A *Pint-sized Revolution*

By Steve James

The micro-pub revolution has now been going for over 10 years, with well over 200 micro-pubs across the country. Martyn Hillier opened the first micro-pub in Britain - The Butchers Arms in Herne, Kent in November 2005 - the day after bringing in the 2003 Licensing Act. This legislation finally made it no longer essential to prove the need for a licence to sell alcohol and thus avoided the battle with the pub companies in court when trying to gain a licence. Kent became the focus for many micro-pubs before the concept spread throughout the country.

So, what is a micro-pub? They are small free-houses which listen to their customers, promote conversation, serve real ale and shun all forms of electronic entertainment. Micro-pubs encourage conversation and talking to strangers is the norm, with no barrier between the landlord and the customer. Most micro-pubs have only one room, which is personal and inviting, with simple home-style furniture. Most focus on cask ale, although some have cider, wine, spirits and keg craft beers. No meals are served, but small bar snacks and pub games may be available. Often there is seating around the room, to promote conversation, rather than separate inward-facing tables. Some micro-pubs don't have a bar and offer table service with beer served direct from the casks in the cellar area. They are usually one-off, not part of a chain and some only have limited opening hours. They are locally orientated, as a community hub and often put new life into old shops on declining high streets. Many of the premises have modest rent and minimal overheads and offer well-priced beers, including vegan and unfin-

ed beers. However, some micro-pubs serve as much keg lager as cask ale and others may be owned by a single brewery; others may have evolved from bottle shops or brewery taps. Some only offer keg craft beer, so do not fit our description since they don't serve any real cask ale. So, the essential hallmarks of a good micro-pub are: conversation – you are joining a welcoming community with whom you share an interest in beer; they serve real cask ale, excellently kept; and there are no distractions!

Micro-pubs have gained the reputation of being well-run, civilised establishments, good neighbours and hubs for the community. They take you back to the days of the old ale-houses, when beer was served from a firkin in someone's front room. They have a landlord who enjoys his work, loves cask ale and is grateful to have found an independent living; he makes it his business to create a friendly and inclusive atmosphere. And the small size of the premises means customers mix with others and make friends and conversations.



*The Coracle, Ironbridge*



In Shropshire, there are a handful of micro-pubs. The Coracle was set up in Ironbridge in 2018, Church Stretton has the Stretton Ale House, Ludlow has the Dog Hangs Well & Wicked Grin and Wellington has The Pheasant. Nearby, in Wolverhampton, is Hail to the Ale (Claregate), Keg & Comfort (Three Tuns), the Starting Gate (Pennfields) and Café Metro (Bilston). In Birmingham, you'll find the Wildcat Tap and Cork & Cage (Stirchley), Hop & Scotch, Gorilla and The Juke (Kings Heath), Hop Garden & Sadlers micro-pub (Harborne), with another Sadlers micro-pub in Quinton, and the Cask & Craft and Brew House & Tea Room (Boldmere, Sutton Coldfield). The micro-pubs in the city centre such as Clink, Tilt, Kilder & The Wolf, only serve keg craft beer and have no real ale.

Elsewhere in the West Midlands, in Dudley, you'll find Tivi-Ale (Dudley), Crafty Pint & Shell-ter (Halesowen), Wheelie Thirsty (Lye) and The Garrison (Merry Hill). In Sandwell is the Old Dispensary (Langley) and Wheelie Thirsty (Old Hill), while in Walsall, there's the Jiggers Whistle (Brownhills) and Turtles Head (Aldridge). In Solihull, you'll find the Ale Rooms and Oktogon (Knowle) and Pup & Duckling and Shaking Hands (Shirley). Also, not far away in Kidderminster, are two Weavers micro-pubs (separately owned - Comberton Hill and Park Lane) and the Beer Emporium Oxford Street, whilst in Bromsgrove, there's The Little Ale House. In Staffordshire, there's Andys' Ale House in Great Wyrley, Sankey's Tap House in Burntwood, Newhall Arms in Cannock, Whippet Inn, Bitter-Suite & Beerbohm in Lichfield, Cask & Pottle and Fuggle & Nugget in Burton-on-Trent, Rusty Barrel in Rugeley,

Floodgate Alehouse in Stafford and Tamworth Brewing Taphouse & King's Ditch in Tamworth. There are also a handful of micro-pubs in the rest of Worcestershire and Warwickshire.



This new wave of micro-pubs has certainly increased the options available to real ale drinkers and has helped to offset the losses of traditional pubs and help the growth of local micro-breweries. Cheers to the micro-pub – small, but perfectly formed!

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# The Masons Arms of Bodmin, Cornwall

By Bluebottle

During a recent visit to Cornwall we had the pleasure of taking a glass or two of the Bodmin local hostelry ales. To our surprise we found the number of Inns to be very close to Bridgnorth numbers. Unfortunately, we could not try them all but a warm welcome was always found and ales of excellent condition.

The Universal Directory of Great Britain 1791 listed between 11 & 16 pubs at this time. In 1831 Census lists 22, 1845 lists 25 in a Borough of 4500. More recently the number has reduced but as with other towns the Wetherspoon Empire grows, The Chapel an Gansblydhen (formerly a Methodist Church) opened in 2008.

The Masons Arms has sat on five different sites, commencing on Bell Lane in 1822 and now sits on Higher Bore Street. It has a long history indeed, almost two hundred years, and should not be missed if you are visiting the area.

On returning home to Bridgnorth we were having a beer in The Harp, High Street and got into conversation with a couple who were on a touring holiday. It transpired that they were ex-landlords, Paul and Wendy Hudson of the Masons Arms, Bodmin. Small world indeed. Many tales were told, I invited them to forward some details of their time as landlords which they kindly agreed to.

Paul and Wendy were trading as a free house from 2010 to 2016. They were in the Good Beer Guide 2013 & 2014. Real ale was dispensed through three handpumps, two being statics selling Tintagel Brewery's 4.4 Arthurs Ale and Sharps Brewery's 3.6 Cornish Coaster, the third pump being guest ales

without repeats. During their period in charge there were over four hundred and twenty-five different ales turned over, not counting repeats.

Paul and Wendy were a pleasure to meet; and it's no surprise that they were successful publicans with their understanding of the pub trade and the needs of the drinker.

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**B**ridgnorth Beer Festival returned on Thursday 5th September after a break of four years whilst renovations at the Severn Valley Railway station took place. The festival ran from noon on the Thursday until 11pm and then 11am to 11pm on the Friday and Saturday.

A small committed team of 10 Bridgnorth CAMRA members have worked enthusiastically since the beginning of this year to organise the festival. The marquee was positioned on the area vacated by the previous buffet facilities and this has also provided an area to house a small marquee for the sale of glasses and tokens thus giving extra space for customers in the main drinking area.

A total of 60 beers and 10 ciders/perries were sourced from as far away as Whitley Bay in Tyne & Wear to Somerset in the south of the country. It's always a stressful time waiting for the beers to arrive but they all turned up and the day before the festival was due to begin saw the last four casks arrive.

All sessions saw an excellent attendance and the dry sunny weather allowed visitors to



enjoy their drinks in the outside seating area. The festival volunteers were kept very busy serving the ales and ciders. Food was also available and thanks go to Beaman's butchers for providing hot pork baps.

The first beer to run out was Arbour Ales Mosaic just before noon on the Friday morning – Number 1 on programme of beers.

A feature of this year's festival was judging of beers for the Telford & East Shropshire round of the Shropshire Brewers Cup. Shrewsbury branch held the West Shropshire round at the Shrewsbury Beer Festival in late July. Two winners from each round now go forward to a final judging at Shifnal Beer Festival in October. On the day our winners were Oatmeal Stout from Corvedale Brewery and Old Prickly from Hobsons Brewery. Congratulations to them and good luck in the final.

I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped make the return of this much-loved festival a success. Special thanks go to the committee who worked tirelessly to make this happen. A big thank you to all the staff at the Severn Valley Railway and Railwayman's Arms who assisted in our set-up preparations.

The festival charity this year was the Royal Air Force Association and thanks go to the customers who donated unused beer tokens and gave money generously. The final total raised will be published in the next edition.

To all the customers who attended the festival, the committee look forward to seeing you all again next year.

*Come and enjoy a taste of Shropshire*



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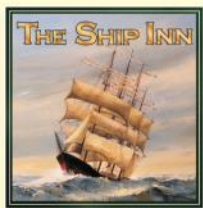


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## Beer Destinations - *Imbibing in Ypres*

By Steve James (With thanks to Keith Rigley and Dave Royle)

Belgium is well-known for its beer, particularly in Brussels, Bruges and Ghent. But although **Ypres** is a well-visited town, it is less well-known for its beer and bars, but more for its role in the First World War. Each year, thousands of British, Irish, Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders, along with those from other Commonwealth countries, visit the town to pay homage to those who died in the battles of Passchendaele and Messines Ridge. Most visitors attend the hauntingly-moving Last Post at the Menen Gate that has been sounded each evening by members of the local fire brigade at 8.00pm since 11 November 1928. This memorial, built in 1927, displays the names of over 54,000 Commonwealth soldiers who died in battle, but have no known grave. In fact, most of Ypres was destroyed during the First World War and was subsequently rebuilt using the original street pattern in the 1920s. Most visitors simply head for the bars around the Cloth Hall and Grote Markt and pay a premium price for a limited selection of beers. But not far away are some excellent bars offering a wide range of beers at reasonable prices, both on draught and in bottle. Here are some of the best.



Probably the best known beer bar in town is the **Kaffee Bazaar** in Boomgaardstraat, not far from the Grote Markt. You could probably spend a whole day trawling through their list of over 150 different beers in this cool, candlelit bar, although some are rather pricey. However, we'll start our tour at the **Ypra Inn**, in the shadow of the Menen Gate in Menenstraat. Even though the beer range is not great, the Ypra Inn comes alive before and after the Last Post. Close by, further along Menenstraat, is **St Arnoldus**, offering 25 beers on draught. The bar is quite small, so get in early! On the opposite side of the road is **The Walker**, worth visiting with a good range of beers.

Just off the square in Korte Torhoutstraat are **The Times** and **Troubadourje**. These are friendly locals' bars, which stock a more limited range of beers; the owner of the Troubadourje also owns St Arnoldus and is very knowledgeable about beer.

Of the bars around the Grote Markt, the best is probably the **Marktcafe Les Halles**, where the beers are reasonably priced. Close by in Neermarkt is **Aux Trois Savoyards**, which also has a decent beer list. A short walk to the west of the main square off the old Fishmarket in Boterstraat is **Genoegen**, a comfy, relaxed bar offering over 50 Belgian beers. Further west and closer to the railway station in Stationstraat is **Sint Sebastian Café**, offering rare beers such as McCouffe and Troubadour. Afterwards, you could join the 'Ramparts Trail', a 5km walking route around the city walls. And if you want a taste of home with ex-soldiers, then the **Old Bill Pub** in Sint Jacobstraat is open until 3:00am.



Although there are several breweries around the town, there is only one brewery actually within it. The **Brouwerij De Kazematten** is actually built deep into the casements of the old city walls in the south of the town in Houten Paard. Brewery tours take place on Saturday afternoons (€10, including three beers), during which you can see the original printing press which printed The Wipers Times, a satirical newsletter published clandestinely by soldiers of the Sherwood Foresters. In fact, some of the brewery's beers are branded as Wipers Times. There are also plenty of local draught beers to try in Ypres, including Hommelmier, Omer, Ypra, Wipers Times and Le Fort, along with beers from St Bernadus and Het Kapittel. Local bottled beers include those from De Dolle Brouwers (Mad Brewers), De Ranke, De Struise and Viven. As the area is close to the hop-growing region, many of the beers have a hoppy flavour, particularly Hommelmier and its Oud Bruin variety.



Beer cuisine is a popular Belgian speciality, where beers are matched with meals. A couple of recommended restaurants include

the **Brasserie Kazematten** in Bollingstraat and **De Ruyffelaer** in De Stuersstraat, one of the most traditional Flemish restaurants – Flemish stew, Rabbit in beer and bacon sauce and Cockerel in cherry beer sauce are very tasty and not forgetting the 'Cod bathing in a vegetable pond with tomato and white wine flavour'!

Finally, a word about bar etiquette. When first visiting a Belgian bar, ask for the 'bierkaart'. This lists the beers on offer, including the daily specials and beer of the month. You normally pay when you leave the bar, rather than after buying each drink. Most bars open around midday and close at 11.00pm or even earlier.

While in Ypres, a visit to the Flanders Fields Museum in the Cloth Hall is highly recommended and you could join a guided tour to the battlefields (half-day: €40-60). Also note that although we tend to call the town Ypres, since it is a Flemish town, it is known in Dutch as 'Ieper'. And since Brits have difficulty pronouncing the name, it is popularly referred to as 'Wipers'. But however you say it, Ypres is still an excellent destination for hunting out Belgian beers!

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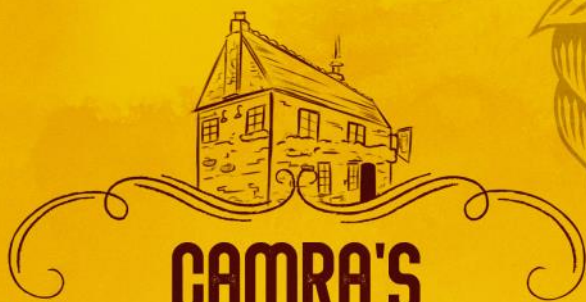
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## Bridgnorth

Squirrel Inn Alveley WV15 6LW  
Peacock Inn Boraston WR15 8LL  
Tally-Ho Inn Bouldon SY7 9DP  
Bamboo Bridgnorth WV16 4BE  
Bear Bridgnorth WV16 4ET  
Bell & Talbot Bridgnorth WV16 4QU  
Fosters Arms Bridgnorth WV15 5AG  
Friars Bridgnorth WV16 4DW  
Golden Lion Bridgnorth WV16 4DS  
Harp Inn Bridgnorth WV16 4DX  
Jewel of the Severn Bridgnorth WV16 4DS  
Kings Head Bridgnorth WV16 4QN  
Old Castle Bridgnorth WV16 4AB  
Railwaymans Arms Bridgnorth WV16 5DT  
Shakespeare Bridgnorth WV16 4AD  
Stable Bar Bridgnorth WV16 4QN  
The George Bridgnorth WV16 4AX  
Vine Bridgnorth WV 15 5AG  
White Lion Bridgnorth WV16 4AB  
Rose & Crown Burford WR15 8HA  
Bulls Head Chelmarsh WV16 6BA  
Plough Inn Claverley WV5 7DX  
Golden Cross Clee Hill SY8 3LZ  
Bell Cleobury Mortimer DY14 8AA  
Kings Arms Cleobury Mortimer DY14 8BS  
Royal Fountain Inn Cleobury Mortimer DY14 8BS  
Sun Inn Corfton SY7 9DF  
Halfway House Eardington WV16 5LS  
Unicorn Inn Hampton Loade WV16 6BN  
Old Gate Inn Heathton WV5 7EB  
Malt Shovel Highley WV16 6HT  
Ship Inn Highley WV16 6NU  
Crown Inn Hopton Wafers DY14 0NB  
Eagle & Serpent Kinlet DY12 3BE  
Bennetts End Inn Knowbury SY8 3LL  
Longville Inn Longville in the Dale TF13 6DT  
Acton Arms Morville WV16 4RU  
Pheasant at Neenton Neenton WV16 6RJ  
Fighting Cocks Stottesdon DY14 8TZ  
Lion O'Morfe Upper Farmcote WV15 5PS  
Three Horseshoes Wheathill WV16 8QT  
Davenport Arms (The Dog) Worfield WV15 5LF  
Wheel Inn Worfield WV15 5NR

## Telford and East Shropshire

Platform Ale House Albrighton WV7 3DF  
Broseley Social Club Broseley TF12 5EZ  
The Riverside Inn Cound SY5 6AF  
Royal Oak Ellerdine Heath TF6 6RL  
New Inn Newport TF10 7LX  
Three Horseshoes Sambrook TF10 8AP  
Plough Inn Shifnal TF11 8AZ  
White Hart Shifnal TF11 8BH  
Coalbrookdale Inn Coalbrook TF8 7DX  
Shakespeare Coalport TF8 7HT  
Elephant & Castle Dawley TF4 2ET  
All Nations Madeley TF7 5DP  
Crown Inn Oakengates TF2 6EA  
Station Hotel TF2 6DU  
Cock Hotel Wellington TF1 2DL  
William Withering Wellington TF1 1LU  
Wrekin Inn Wellington TF1 1RH

## Market Drayton

Old Jack Inn Calverhall SY13 4PA  
Fox & Hounds Cheswardine TF9 2RS  
Red Lion Cheswardine TF9 2RS  
Red Lion Market Drayton TF9 1JP  
Sandbrook Vaults Market Drayton TF9 3BY



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# Get Your Thinking Caps On

## Beer Sudoku

To complete the sudoku puzzles,  
fill in the boxes such that the  
letters

**P I N T O F A L E**

are found in each row, column  
and 3x3 square without  
duplicates.

## Beginner

			A	O	L		T	I
	T	O			I			
	F	L	T					
		E						A
T		A		N		I		F
N						L		
					A	E	F	
			N			P	O	
P	E		L	T	O			

## Intermediate

	I	N	L			T		E
		T	E		O			
L				F	T			
		F			N		P	
N								O
	O		L			I		
			I	N				L
			T		F	A		
E		O			A	F	I	





# Get Your Thinking Caps On : Answers

Solutions To The Sudoku Puzzles On Page 47

E	P	N	A	O	L	F	T	I
A	T	O	E	F	I	N	L	P
I	F	L	T	P	N	O	A	E
F	O	E	I	L	P	T	N	A
T	L	A	O	N	E	I	P	F
N	I	P	F	A	T	L	E	O
O	N	T	P	I	A	E	F	L
L	A	I	N	E	F	P	O	T
P	E	F	L	T	O	A	I	N

O	I	N	L	A	P	T	F	E
L	F	T	E	I	O	N	L	P
L	P	E	N	F	T	5	A	I
I	E	F	O	T	N	L	P	A
N	A	L	F	P	I	E	T	O
T	O	P	L	E	L	I	N	F
F	T	A	I	N	E	P	O	L
P	L	I	T	O	F	A	E	N
E	N	O	P	L	A	F	I	T

## **Bridgnorth Meetings**

22<sup>nd</sup> October - 19:30

The White Lion, Bridgnorth

9<sup>th</sup> November

The Beer Festivals 'Thank You' trip  
Kidderminster Beer Festival and surrounding pubs

Free to all volunteers at the 2019  
Bridgnorth or Shifnal Beer Festivals

26<sup>th</sup> November - 20:00

The Unicorn Inn, Hampton Loade  
Minibus (must Pre-book) will depart from  
opposite The George at 19:30

For Latest Updates

**See The Bridgnorth CAMRA  
Facebook Group**

**[www.bridgnorthcamra.org.uk](http://www.bridgnorthcamra.org.uk)**

## **TES Meetings**

5<sup>th</sup> October - 12:00

West Midlands Regional Meeting  
The Shakespeare Inn, Bridgnorth

8<sup>th</sup> October - 20:00

The Old Fighting Cocks, Oakengates

12<sup>th</sup> November - 20:00

Bull's Head, Wrockwardine Wood

More ideas, suggestions and bookings to  
Paul Bradburn 01952 510611 e-mail  
[paulbradburn8439@btinternet.com](mailto:paulbradburn8439@btinternet.com)

## **Market Drayton Events**

**No Information Provided**

For more information  
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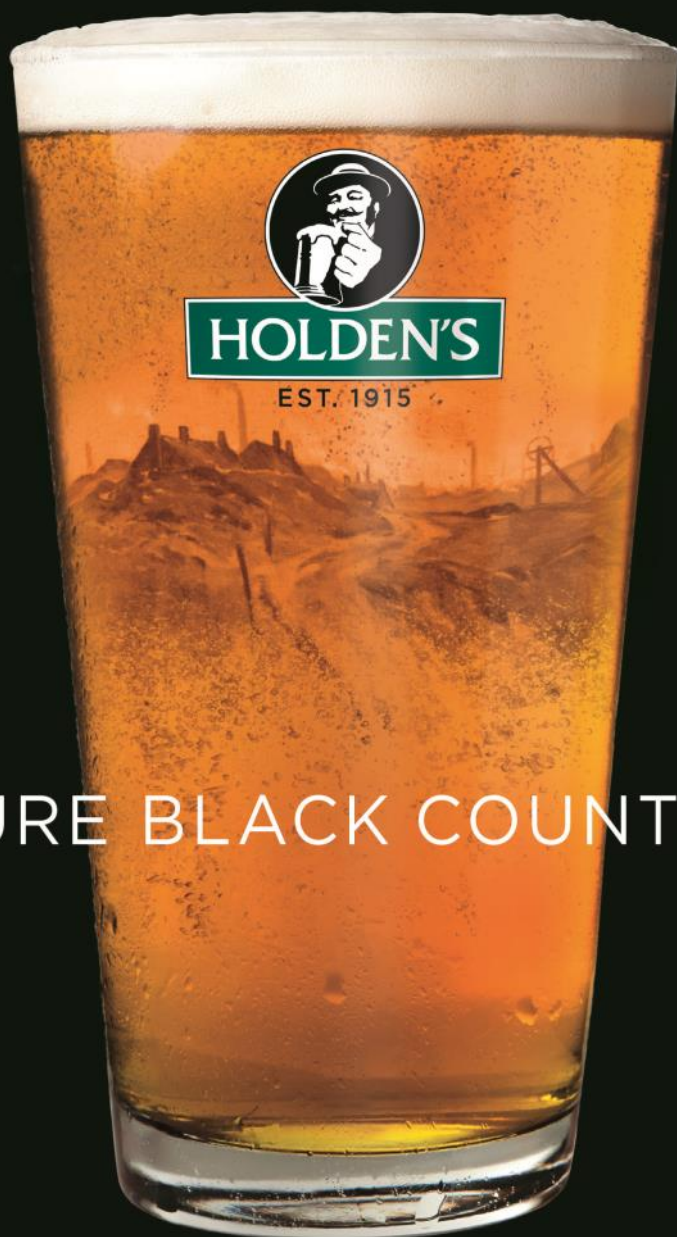
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