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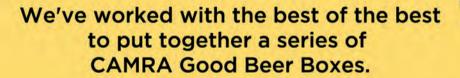
Table service has been forced on pubs, but should it be here to stay?

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From the editor



In many parts of the country the church has become the place where people go occasionally for a wedding, baptism or a funeral. The local high street, once busy with shoppers supporting local businesses, is in sharp decline. But the disappearance of a pub from a community represents something more profound about the fading of the community.

Pubs matter, they really do. As Will Hawkes recounts in this issue's lead feature. He finds that pubs have

rarely had it harder than in the past year. The good news is that across the UK, there are many communities determined to support their local.

The past 18 months will have hit the finances of many pubs extremely hard. Some will find it difficult to survive. However, what is indisputable is the fact that pubs are the beating hearts of many communities from the rural idyll to urban chic. So, it is hardly surprising that community groups have sprung up to rescue their locals. In many parts of the country, the lockdown has reignited the community spirit that centres on many pubs.

Pubs are part of our cultural landscape. They are part of our very being. The writer Hilaire Belloc, writing in the last century, said: "When you have lost your inns, drown your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England." For England, please also read Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It is painful to see this great institution that is the pub potentially disappearing. Pubs are a vital and vibrant part of our culture. As we start to get back to pubs, we must remember that they will help us overcome the social isolation and cultural confusion of our age. A good pub is multifaceted. It has to be. A successful pub is one that moves with the times. To stay the same as the traditional place people like to go out to, the pub has to modernise and change. That's what makes them so exciting.

• BEER is changing, and from this issue it includes eight extra pages dedicated to carrying What's Brewing stories. In May, What's Brewing news transferred to a dedicated online platform. Visit wb.camra.org.uk Tim Hampson



GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Freelance writer Will Hawkes reports on the campaigners who are unbowed in their determination to save local pubs from closure.





Hollie Stephens brings together her two passions: canalside pubs and great beers.

BEER's food and pub correspondent Susan Novak discovers the joy of eating outside, whatever the weather.



BEER

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CAMRA is a company limited by guarantee, run at a national level by an elected, unpaid board of directors (the National Executive) and at regional level by its regional directors, both backed by a full-time professional staff. CAMRA promotes good-quality real ale and pubs, as well as acting as the consumer's champion in relation to the UK and European beer and drinks industry. It aims to: 1. Protect and improve consumer rights 2. Promote quality, choice and value for money 3. Support the public house as a focus of community life 4. Campaign for greater appreciation of traditional beers, ciders and perries, and the public house as part of our national heritage and culture 5. Seek improvements in all licensed premises and throughout the brewing industry. BEER will not carry editorial and advertising that counters these aims and we only accept advertisements for bottle- or cask-conditioned products.

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Passion for pubs reignited

Pubs have rarely had it harder than in the past year. Some have regrettably closed for good, but it's not all bad news, as **Will Hawkes** reports from communities determined to support their local

ILLUSTRATION BY JEM MILTON

By the start of February, Ollie Ripley

was feeling the effects of a year spent largely at home. The 29-year-old maths teacher "felt rubbish", having not exercised since the first lockdown, so he pulled on his trainers and went for a five-kilometre run.

As he reached the halfway point, though, something caught his eye – the Surrey, a sizable modern pub in Woking, Surrey. As so often with pubs, it provoked a moment of inspiration. "I thought 'that's quite interesting, it's at exactly the point where I turn for home'," he says. "I decided that for every day until pubs reopened, I was going to run to the pub."

And so he did. In the following weeks and months, he ran to pubs all over Woking and Walton-on-Thames, home to his father and occasional jogging companion, Andrew.

He documented his progress on TikTok, a social media app better known for family dance routines and soft-focus clips of fluffy pets. Each film followed the same formula: Ollie preparing to run, getting to the pub, finding it closed and being comically disappointed. It soon became clear he wasn't the only one. His TikTok account – @thepubrunner – rapidly gathered followers: 100 in the first week, then 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, more than 10,000 after less than a month. At the time of writing, in early April, it has more than 32,000.

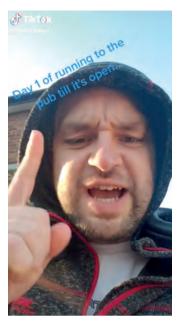
"Everyone missed the pub," he says. "They were desperate for them to be open, and I guess my pub runs were like a countdown to that moment."

The popularity of Ollie's efforts, which raised money for the charity Mind, illustrates one of 2020's hidden dynamics. Even as pubs have struggled economically, with many forced to close for good, the British public – forbidden to step inside – has begun to understand why they're so valuable.

"This past year has reignited that community spirit that exists around pubs, and it's shown that actually when there are times of adversity, pubs can play a role in helping to address that," says Dr Claire Markham, a lecturer at Nottingham Trent University and an expert in rural pubs.











Above: Pub runner Ollie and dad Andrew struck a chord with a nation deprived of its locals

"We've seen that with pubs doing takeaway, or being a space where food banks can be set up. That's the community part [of pubs], which often gets overlooked."

As Dr Markham points out, this revived relationship has manifested itself in a variety of ways. Some pubs have supported nearby people by setting up food banks, delivering meals or by simply checking in on regulars. Some regulars have supported their pubs by helping to pay rent, purchasing takeaway pints or even arranging to buy pubs to keep them going.

One of the most shared articles on social media this year was a *Guardian* story about developers being forced to rebuild the Carlton Tavern, a London pub demolished illegally in 2015, brick by brick. It's been an exceptionally tough few months, but could pubs in general be about to enjoy a similarly Lazarus-like revival, buoyed by lockdown-fuelled longing?

When the first government-enforced

closure began in March 2020, Colin and Trudy Faulkner, who run the Station Inn in Kettering, Northants, were told by owners Punch that their rent, £600 a week, was being deferred and not cancelled (Punch has "sorted things out" since, according to Colin).

It was a perilous moment for a cosy back-street boozer known for its ales, but the Faulkners' loyal regulars weren't about to let them face it alone.

"I felt it was really important to support them," says Jennie Willson, who immediately organised a fundraiser. "They're very much the local pub rather than just a pub that happens to be there. It's a community place.

"Colin and Trudy have always been really supportive to the community and to charitable events. They've always given time, given money, done lots of fundraisers. They're really, really community-minded people."

The fundraiser was resisted by the Faulkners at first. "I was embarrassed, but we said to her, well, you do what you want... it's up to you," Colin says. "But it was very humbling and fantastic really, and nice to know what people think of

"Colin and Trudy have always been really supportive to the community. They've always given time, given money, done lots of fundraisers" us." It raised £3,410 to help keep the Station Inn alive. It was payback for the central role the pub plays in community life, says Jennie.

"They did everything they could [for the neighbourhood] during lockdown," she says. "They started doing a Sunday music session, for example. They would bring their speakers out and then everyone in the street would come out into their own gardens, so still distanced, but able to have a bit of a community event. They really brought the community together, they really made the effort."

In Melling on Merseyside, a similar

relationship between pub and community blossomed during 2020, and on a huge scale. With the first lockdown looming, Sue and Adam Franklin, leaseholders at the Horse & Jockey, decided to use the pub's sizeable kitchen to produce meals for vulnerable locals.

A message seeking help on Facebook was followed by a meeting at which 25 locals turned up.

Before they knew it, that group had become the Melling Community Volunteers and it was producing and delivering hot meals seven days a week











to more than 100 people in the area, funded by food donations and a JustGiving page that raised more than £5,000 by midsummer 2020.

"The community embraced it straight away," Adam says. "The volunteers have worked tirelessly, and Sue is at the heart of it. She's a typical landlady: heart of gold."

People from further afield chipped in, too. "A lot of people who live down south were asking, 'Look, can I pay you to feed my mum?' We were just like, 'No, no, no. We'll just get a hot meal out every day.' There was a guy, an IT consultant from Mumbai, who dropped 500 guid onto the JustGiving page because he read about us.

"That's why we do this job. You lie awake in bed every morning, you've got no money, you've got a VAT bill that is going to take forever to pay off, you don't know when you're going to be opening, but that sort of support makes you go, 'Right, come on, let's crack on again."

It's been a huge feat of organisation -"Well-established social enterprise groups look at our spreadsheet with envy," says Adam – and community cohesion. The Volunteers have taken on challenge after challenge over the past year. When

"There was a guy, an IT consultant from Mumbai, who dropped 500 auid onto the JustGiving page because he read about us"

Marcus Rashford highlighted the holiday-time hunger of kids who needed free school meals, for example, they put together food packs and established a pick-up service at the local Scouts hut.

This work will continue once the current problems are over. They've been given a 40-foot shipping container, which will be fitted out as a training kitchen and a larder for the community. They're speaking to a landowner about taking on some land at a peppercorn rent to grow food for Adam's course, Fed Up, where he teaches locals how to make the most out of fresh food with a slow cooker.

The past year has brought the pub, which Adam and Sue took on four years ago, closer than ever to the local community. "I do feel it's brought us together," Adam says.

In London, meanwhile, one workingclass pub has been able to attract a new demographic during lockdown. Dr Jenny Thatcher, a sociologist, has been living

and working in this pub since late 2019, while putting together a workplace ethnography about its role amid the gentrification of the surrounding neighbourhood. When Covid-19 arrived, though, she decided to focus on documenting how this urban pub dealt with the pandemic.

It's been a difficult year, but there have been reasons for optimism - like the regulars who've volunteered to do jobs around the pub for free, and the welcomed new customers it acquired when takeaway drinks were allowed back in the summer of 2020.

"We attracted a younger demographic - people in their 20s and 30s, groups of friends going over to the park," she says. "We started doing jugs of Pimm's. This new clientele hadn't really tried our pub before, but now they've seen us and they've realised that we're open late [until 3am]. And they said, 'Oh, yeah, we'll come and try it.' Then of course we had our regulars who were coming back [for takeaway beer] that missed us. Even from a brief interaction [with us], they were getting something. 'Well, have you seen this person? Have you seen that person? What's happened there?""

B





A remarkable £260,000 was raised from 430 investors to take community ownership of the White Swan in Gressenhall, Norfolk

Where pubs have closed

permanently, meanwhile, local people have taken control. The community-run pub movement has been gaining momentum over the past decade – there are now 150 across the country, up by 50 per cent since 2015, according to the Plunkett Foundation. The arrival of Covid-19 in March last year might have been expected to have slowed their spread. It hasn't turned out like that: 13 opened in 2020, with more on the way.

Norfolk seems to be a particular stronghold for the community pub movement. Two recent projects are breathtaking in what they've achieved. The Locks Inn, in Beccles, where £600,000 has been raised in eight weeks from a remarkable 1,400 shareholders, and the White Swan in Gressenhall, which, like the Locks, aims to reopen its doors for business later this year.

The White Swan [then known as the Swan] closed in July 2018, and by that autumn the owner had published plans to turn it into four dwellings. At that point villagers started to mobilise, led by Rosie and Alex Begg, who moved to Gressenhall at the end of 2018.

Rosie was returning – her family owns a local farm, growing blackcurrants for

Ribena – while Alex had experience of social investment through previous employment in London.

"Gressenhall is a really special community," says Alex. "There are all sorts of societies and things that make it really great, but I think the missing ingredient was we've got this lovely green in the middle of the village where the pub sits, and it just seemed like such an own goal to let it go."

So they didn't. The Gressenhall Community Enterprise was founded to raise the £360,000 required to buy the pub, and locals were asked what they could afford to invest. These were awkward conversations, says Alex, but it helped that the team came from all walks of life within the village. "It's a good cross-section," he says. "It's not just a little clique."

Fundraising began in August 2020 and was completed by the end of September, spurred on by a Swan-shaped totaliser at the pub built by members of Dereham Men's Shed. A total of £260,000 was raised from 430 investors, with the final

"A foreign beach holiday might seem miles away, but the nice little pub at the end of the road is within reach" £100,000 coming from the Plunkett Foundation. "We've probably got about 50 per cent of the households in the village invested," says Alex. "Even if you've only got a £50 stake, which was the minimum investment, that gives you a bond and a small sense of ownership."

They got the keys in January, planning permission in February, and hope to open in the autumn. Did lockdown make a difference to the fundraising?

"While we were raising money, I heard people talking about what they really miss at the moment," says Alex. "A foreign beach holiday might seem miles away, but the nice little pub at the end of the road is within reach. Maybe pre-pandemic we were all guilty of taking for granted what was there on our doorstep. Maybe it has been an opportunity for us to re-evaluate and to treasure what's important.

It's really difficult to tangibly measure it, but yeah, I'm sure there's a bit of that [in our success]."

In Culross, Fife, they're hoping for

similar success. David Alexander and Ann Dowds have run the Red Lion pub for 30 years but are retiring and want



The owners of the Red Lion in Culross, Fife, want to leave the pub in the community's hands when thev retire

to leave it in the community's hands. A campaign to raise money was postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic, but in February this year, a first fundraiser was launched to pay for initial costs. It flew past its £9,000 target, ending just short of £11,000.

"We thought if we got a couple of grand, it would allow us to print some literature, get a website up and do some bits and pieces," says organiser Tim Collins. "The thing shot up to £9,000 in two days! We were getting donations from around the planet. And not only was that coming in, but we were getting feedback saying, 'Let us know when you do the share offer.' That's given us a lot of confidence."

Key to this has been Culross's heritage as a film and TV location, most notably for the series Outlander. It means that West Fife Community Trading can rely on more than just local support in its bid to buy the Red Lion, a place where locals and visitors have long mixed happily.

"It's a community hub; people meet there casually or drop in for lunches and meals and things," says Tim. "You go in there, you're bound to meet somebody. And sometimes you'll meet film stars!

"I'm not particularly a drinker. I'd much rather go to a pub and be with people and enjoy the atmosphere"

You never know who you're going to meet - and the craic is always good."

Rural pubs like these are Dr Markham's speciality. As the author of a series of academic papers focused on village pubs, she's fascinated by how community and pub intersect.

"One of the pubs that I go to is the Geese and Fountain [in Croxton Kerrial, Leics]," she says. "When the first lockdown hit, they went above and beyond. They said, 'We can get toilet rolls for you, we can get this. We can deliver, we can do that.' Things like that are so important."

She believes pubs that innovate – as many were forced to do during lockdown - could now have a chance to establish links with people who were not regular visitors before.

"I'm not particularly a drinker," she says. "I'd much rather go to a pub and be with people and enjoy the atmosphere. That's what draws me in. What would draw me in even more is a broader range of, say, soft drinks. There's a marketplace for that, [and serving those drinks] and well, actually, there's more to pubs than alcohol. I'm a perfect example. I really couldn't care less in terms of drinking. It's not that that draws me going to these spaces. I want that community feel."

Ollie finished his daily runs in April,

when pub gardens opened, undertaking a few final trips before customers were allowed inside in May. (He celebrated with a glass of Guinness.) As someone at the centre of one of lockdown's most intriguing social media phenomenons, he thinks customers have learnt to appreciate what is great about pubs their huge community value.

"I think what's happened has made a massive difference to the way we see pubs," he says. "We took them for granted beforehand, thinking that they'll always be there. But when you're not allowed to go to them, you realise how much of a lifeline they are."



Will Hawkes is the author of Craft Beer London. a guide to the city's beer scene. He is a former British Beer Writer of the Year. He tweets at @Will_Hawkes

Growing from strength to strength

Thornbridge brewery is celebrating 15 remarkable years that have seen it move from a garden shed to a state-of-the-art plant. **Roger Protz** caught up with its founders

Thornbridge brewery, hailed as

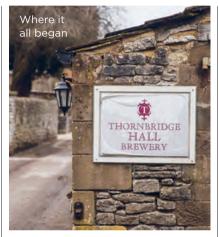
one of the pioneers of the craft beer movement, started life as a small operation in a garden shed and has gone on to become a sizeable one with a capacity of 25,000 barrels a year and an impressive portfolio of beers.

Along the way, Thornbridge has won a vast number of awards for its beers and has turned its leading ale, Jaipur IPA (5.9 per cent ABV), into an international brand that has helped drive the global pale ale revival.

The brewery was the brainchild of Jim Harrison and Simon Webster. Jim made money from his company that supplied insulating materials to steel and other industries, and he was able to buy the 12th-century Thornbridge Hall in the Derbyshire Dales. He moved in with his wife, Emma, and their children, and set about restoring the hall – which had become a teacher training college – and its 12 acres of gardens.

"The place was a wreck," he says. "We needed to commercialise it and one way was to make beer."

Jim met Simon through their shared support of Sheffield Wednesday football club. Simon worked on the marketing side of the food business and he and Jim launched a range of pickles and specialist coffees at Thornbridge. They added beer as a result of supplying pickles to the Fat Cat pub in Sheffield run by Dave Wickett, who also owned the Kelham Island brewery. The brewery won CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain crown in 2004 for Pale Rider



"The place was a wreck," he says. "We needed to commercialise it and one way was to make beer"

(5.2 per cent), one of the early hoppy golden ales.

Even though Dave supported Sheffield United – and such things matter in Steel City – Jim loved Pale Rider and discussed setting up a brewery at the hall with Dave's support. They sourced a 10-barrel plant from a closed brewery near York and installed the kit in 2004 in a former stonemason's and joiner's shop in the grounds. It took a year to redesign the building and squeeze in the kit, and the first

They hired two mustard-keen young brewers, Stefano Cossi and Martin Dickie. Thornbridge proved a good training ground, as Stefano later joined Molson Coors and Martin went on to

beer was launched in 2005.

become one of the founders of BrewDog in Scotland. A third brewer, Kelly Ryan, became a major force in the beer revolution down under when he returned to his native New Zealand.

The first Thornbridge beer was a traditional bitter called Lord Marples (4 per cent) after the 19th-century owner of the hall. It was followed by Blackthorn (4.4 per cent), which could have caused problems as there's a leading cider with that name.

"We didn't get a lawyer's letter!" Jim laughs. "The beer was named after a motif in a stained-glass window in the hall designed by William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones." The pair were leading members of the arts and crafts movement in the 19th century.

The breakthrough came on 7 June 2005 with the launch of Jaipur IPA. It was named after the city where Jim and Emma got married, but the beer also stressed the links to the early pale ales brewed in England for the Raj in India.

"Jaipur was influenced by American IPAs," Simon says, "but we're a nation

of pint drinkers and we needed a cask beer with drinkability. IPA is an English style that went to the US and then came back again."

Jim adds: "Dave said we needed a beer that would turn people's heads. He took one sip of Jaipur and said: 'That's a world beater."

The beer, originally in cask and bottle but now also in keg and can, lived up to Dave's prediction. It accounts for 40 per









Top: Beer and football fans Simon Webster (left) and Jim Harrison Above: Thornbridge brews an impressive range

cent of the brewery's output and is exported to more than 30 countries. It's brewed with top English malting barley Maris Otter and – stressing the American influence – hopped with Ahtanum, Cascade, Centennial, Chinook, Columbus and Simcoe varieties.

It's won more than 100 awards in

competitions around the world and Simon recalls it winning two in one week from beer festivals as far apart as Aberdeen and Penzance.

He's careful not to claim Thornbridge was the pioneer of craft brewing. "We either started the wave or caught it," he says. "Our aim was a simple one: to bring people to better beer."

And better beer includes cask ale. Before the coronavirus crisis, Thornbridge had planned 12 new cask ales for 2020 and the brewery, Simon says, was selling more cask than at any time in its history.

"It's part of our heritage," he says, "but we've brought modernity to the sector with the likes of Ice Cream Porter [4.5 per cent] and Flat White Pale Ale [4.9 per cent]."

The demand for Thornbridge beer rapidly outpaced the original plant. In 2009, a new site, the Riverside, was built in Bakewell alongside the River Wye, close to where Richard Arkwright – the Father of the Industrial Revolution – harnessed

the power of the water to build his cotton-spinning frames.

Thanks to his Italian connections, Stefano recommended Jim and Simon should commission a plant from Velo, which designed kit capable of producing both ale and lager.

Head brewer Rob Lovatt says he can push four brews a day through the plant. His lagers, such as Lukas (4.2 per cent), enjoy a cold fermentation at 9°C and are stored for a minimum of four to five weeks. He uses malt from the German town of Bamberg, world-acclaimed for the quality of its brewing grains, and his yeast culture also comes from Bavaria.

Rob joined Thornbridge in 2010 from Meantime in London and he uses





Above: Rob Lovatt heads the brewing team Right: Four brews a day are possible Below: Award-winning Saint Petersburg

that experience to fashion a wide range of beers. He plans more bottle-conditioned ales and says his draught beers are "properly cask-conditioned". He's critical of some brewers who cut corners where cask ale is concerned. He plans a number of collaboration beers with other brewers, starting with Salopian; Harvey's and Timothy Taylor's will follow when the current crisis is over.

The most innovative 'collab' was a beer called Serpent, brewed with Garrett Oliver, the renowned brewmaster at the Brooklyn brewery in New York City.

The 10 per cent ABV Belgian-style golden ale beer was aged in bourbon casks for 18 months and it had an addition of lees, the sediment in a cider cask that's packed with protein and wild yeasts. This element was supplied by Tom Oliver, the acclaimed Herefordshire cider maker, and its inclusion created a secondary fermentation before the beer was filled into Champagne bottles and sold in 2016.

Brewing still continues at the

original plant at Thornbridge Hall, where small-batch and experimental beers are made. Rob and his team are keen on barrel-ageing and have experimented with several different versions of Saint Petersburg Russian Imperial Stout (7.4 per cent) using whisky, bourbon, wine and sherry barrels.

In common with its Jaipur stablemate, Saint Petersburg has picked up many



'They're well placed to weather the storm, with half of production available in bottle and can, along with mini kegs'

awards and Simon says the team was especially pleased when, against stiff competition, it was named CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain in December 2019.

In that year, Thornbridge produced an impressive 85 beers, and new cask and keg beers were planned for 2020 before the coronavirus pandemic meant all the plans had to be shelved and rewritten.

The brewery's sales and marketing director, Dominic Metcalfe, says they're well placed to weather the storm, with half of production available in bottle and can, along with six-litre mini kegs.

Dom has an impressive track record of eight years with Adnams, a year with Tim Taylor's and also a spell with Black Isle in Scotland. He's convinced cask beer will bounce back when the pandemic ends and Jaipur will continue

its double-digit growth. He exports to 35 countries and sells cask beer in such unlikely markets as France and Italy.

"France is our second-biggest export market," he says. "Finland is the biggest market and cask has cult status there. Denmark is also big for cask."

Thornbridge owns six pubs in Sheffield and a further two food-led outlets. Jim personally owns the Packhorse in Little Longstone near his home. The brewery runs three brewpubs in collaboration with Pivovar in York, Leeds and Birmingham. The partnership is with the Czech brewer Bernard.

While Thornbridge doesn't own the brilliantly restored Sheffield railway station tap, its beers are on prominent sale there and many travellers, including this writer, have been known to miss a train or three while supping in the opulent Victorian bar.

Whether or not Thornbridge started the craft beer wave, it's certainly on the crest of it now, with its large range of beers available at home and abroad. The only sadness has been the death in 2012 of Dave Wickett. Dave inspired Jim and Simon, and remained a consultant until he lost a brave struggle with cancer.

Jim has picked up the flame lit by Dave with the Fat Cat and Kelham Island. "Cask ale is quintessentially about British beer and pubs," he says. "It's the best way to drink."

And long may it remain so.

Lager revelation

Carlsberg may not produce the best lagers in the world, but it could claim to brew probably the most interesting

There are rare moments in life when

something extraordinary sends a tingle down your spine. It happened the first time I came across Stonehenge and realised the stones had been there since the dawn of civilisation.

Can beer have a similar effect? Yes – I got the tingle in 2017 when I sampled a glass of Carlsberg lager in Copenhagen.

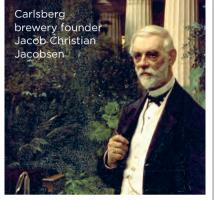
It's not a typing mistake. I really do mean Carlsberg, for there's more to the Danish giant than the bland brews that come out of the Northampton factory and which – with sincere apologies to Orson Welles – are probably not the best lagers in the world.

The beer in question was a recreation of what was called Bavarian Beer and launched in Copenhagen in 1883. The founder of the brewery, Jacob Christian Jacobsen, had made the arduous coach journey to Munich to see at first-hand how the Spaten brewery had developed commercial lager brewing with what was called bottom-working yeast. This was yeast that worked slowly at a low temperature and sank to the bottom of conditioning vessels, in sharp distinction to ale yeast that works at a warm temperature.

Jacob returned home with a sample of Spaten's yeast, experimented for some time and finally opened a brewery he named Carlsberg after his son Carl and the hill, or *berg*, on which it stood. He dug deep cellars to store his brews and when he launched his Bavarian Beer, it met with great approval

The Industrial Revolution was in full swing. People were moving in large numbers from the country to work in factories, mines and

by drinkers.



'Its impact was so profound on a world scale that it was given the scientific name of Saccharomyces carlsbergensis'

mills, and they wanted refreshment in the form of beer. Until then, beer was brewed only in the cool times of the year, as hot summer weather turned beer sour and undrinkable.

Carlsberg opened a sophisticated

laboratory where a scientist called Emil Hansen analysed brewing yeast and discovered it contained bad strains as well as good ones. After months of tireless work, he was able to isolate a single strain of perfect yeast that enabled lager beer to be brewed all year round. Its impact was so profound

on a world scale that it was given the scientific name of Saccharomyces carlsbergensis.

Emil's work was not lost on ale brewers in Britain. They, too, employed scientists who perfected ale yeasts, removed bad strains and enabled beer to be brewed throughout the year.

As I lack access to a time machine, I had no way of knowing what the first lager beers tasted like – until I visited Carlsberg in 2017. I was with a group of brewers and beer writers from around the world who had been invited to join in celebrations for the 170th anniversary of the brewery.

To our astonishment and delight, we were presented with samples of a beer called 1883, the year Carlsberg's Bavarian Beer was launched. An old bottle of the original beer had been discovered and it proved possible to take the yeast sediment and culture up a working strain that was used to recreate it.

Forget golden lager. The beer was brown, for at the time malt was heated over wood fires. Beer, both ale and lager, only became pale when wood was replaced by coke as the source of heat. The beer had a malty, slightly funky and sulphury character, with delicate hop bitterness, and was a fascinating insight into how beer tasted all those years ago.

Carlsberg and other Nordic brewers continue to produce further historic beer styles in the shape of porter and stout. They are based on beers brewed in London for export and which became so popular that Nordic and Baltic brewers created their own versions, in several cases using lager rather than ale yeasts.

Carlsberg has a Stout Porter (7.8 per cent ABV), while in Sweden you can sample Carnegie Porter (5.6 per cent) and in Finland Koff Porter (7.2 per cent).

You can buy 1883 at the Visit Carlsberg Museum in Copenhagen. Get it if you can – you may consider it to be *probably* the most interesting lager you have tasted.



Roger Protz's latest book, *The Family Brewers* of Britain, is on sale from CAMRA's online bookstore. Follow him

at @RogerProtzBeer



"The beer we drink today is an extract of malted barley, boiled with hops and fermented by yeast..."

The Book of Beer, Andrew Campbell, 1956

WORDS: ADRIAN TIERNEY-JONES ILLUSTRATION: CAMERON LAW

The above quote is the easiest

definition of beer you can use if someone ever asks how it is made. Funny-sounding words like wort, strike heat, hop back and esters can be also floated about, but beer is by definition a pretty simple combination. Ask most brewers and you will get a similar answer, such as the one I got from Colin Stronge, head brewer at Salt Beer Factory in Yorkshire: "To me, beer is a beverage made from mostly water, malt, hops and yeast."

Mostly? Let us dig deeper into the question, which I also asked Sophie de Ronde, who heads up the brewing team at Burnt Mill in Suffolk. You could say that the answer expands on Colin's brief statement.

"Beer for me is a beverage that has been made from cereal, water, hops and fermented with yeast," she emailed. "However, what classifies as 'cereal' for me means it doesn't have to be just barley and/or wheat. Other grains and pseudo-cereals make up beers all over the world with the use of maize, quinoa, sorghum, etc. I also think hops can be replaced by herbs/spices, and this then of course goes back to the now interchangeable ale/beer and the meaning of 'gruit', which I would still classify as beer. The same goes for

mixed fermentations and cultures in sour beers and saisons."

How about cake mix? The first time I visited a Mikkeller bar in Copenhagen, I really fancied an imperial stout and there was one chalked up on the blackboard. My heart sank as I read the description, though – the impy that was available on this particular night had coffee, cinnamon, almonds, cocoa nibs, vanilla beans and habanero peppers added. I just wanted an imperial stout, so I ordered an IPA.

'Even though some of us might get aerated at the thought of a prune gose or a bitter made with strawberries, is it such a bad thing?'

Stretching the meaning of beer so that it becomes as infinite as the universe is a common thread running through much of modern brewing. Look elsewhere and you will find beers that replicate the flavour of jam roly-poly, Neapolitan ice cream and barbecue sauce. Pale ales have peach added, and bitters are laced with cinnamon, though this might not be such a surprise given if we go back a few years, cask beer stalwart Batemans was adding fruit, coffee and biscuit flavours to its beers. Meanwhile, it seems that anyone who does a Berliner weiss or

Leipziger gose feels obliged to drop in flavourings of fruit, tea or spices. Even the mighty IPA has not been spared. Fruit smoothie IPA, anyone?

Sometimes it feels like it is carnage

out there as brewers look to replicate every flavour they can remember from their childhood onwards. Meanwhile, in the opposite corner, the purists ask if nothing is sacred, and others plaintively ask for a beer that tastes like beer (that begs a question, though: does that mean stout, IPA, bitter, etc?). Has the mighty fortress that is British brewing fallen? It's a question I ask myself now and again, and then recall how beer has always been like the sea, with the tides of fashion dragging it this way and that.

Even though some of us might briefly get aerated at the thought of a prune gose (OK I made that one up, but you know what I mean) or a bitter made with strawberries, is it such a bad thing? Shouldn't brewers be pushing the boundaries of what we know as beer? After all, I certainly don't want to go back to 1948 when, in *The Brewer's Art*, part of the Whitbread Library, the author wrote: "In this country there are four chief types of beer today: pale ale, mild ale, stout and Burton."

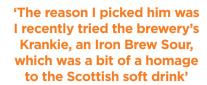


feature | PUSHING BOUNDARIES

For an insight into the thinking behind some of today's more eclectic beers, it works to talk to the brewers, and so initially I turned to Exale Brewing's founder and brewer Mark Hislop, asking him how far would he stretch the meaning of beer. The reason I picked him was I recently tried the brewery's Krankie (4.2 per cent ABV), an Iron Brew Sour, which – you guessed – was a bit of a homage to the Scottish soft drink.

"I think it's detrimental to be too

protective of meanings and styles for beer," he told me. "I love traditional beer and love making them, but I like to mess around with parameters and combining cold brew coffee with a traditional ESB, or making a Flanders red with black trumpet mushrooms can be respectful



to the history of a style but adds new depths of flavour from a more modern perspective. I'm not interested in preserving a history, I'm interested in interpreting traditions and pushing boundaries within styles and seeing what we end up with."

As it happens, I would love to try those two examples of Exale's experimentation, though maybe it's the wilder shores of beer experimentation that has inspired me to write this article.

I'm thinking of beers that taste like the contents of that sweetshop you used to linger in on the way home from school or are served up like ice cream. Again, though I'm conflicted in my views, there is no iron law that says an ice-cream serve is wrong or right, it's just another way of presenting a beer.

Jaega Wise of Wild Card in east London is a brewer I have a lot of respect for. I like the beers she makes and have also judged in beer competitions alongside her. I asked about her thoughts on what is innovation and what is gimmickry.

"We did a passion fruit gose and bought a slushy machine to serve it through," she said. "It was a gimmick for a trade show and was then used at our taproom. For people who do not like beer, it was a surprise to them that they liked it. We did a doughnut stout last year, and it was quite an interesting one; we used fresh raspberry and cacao nibs, and it had a slight tartness, right next to roasted barley. I think innovation is aiding the growth of the craft beer market; people are interested in new flavours, new combinations of hops and I'm all for it." Sophie has a different view: "Most of the time things like

ice-cream dispensers are a gimmick and a passing phase, but good on the brewers for trying these things. It is a tough market out there and if you can do something to make yourself stand out, then create that USP. I might argue, though, is the use of an ice-cream dispenser innovative? It is a new and different way of pouring beer, but as a dispensing machine it's not an innovation, is it?"

Returning to that cake mix imperial

stout in Copenhagen, what I didn't realise at the time was that what I was drinking is now known as a pastry stout. A doughnut stout, a jam roly-poly porter, these are pastry stouts, but for Colin – who I saw give an excellent presentation on pastry stouts at the Brewers' Congress in 2019 – dark beers provide an excellent canvas for different flavours.

"I think that the extra complexity provided by the dark malts gives a wider range of flavours to play with and accentuate or work against," he said. "We have since played with using paler beers with some flavourings, but I feel the broader flavours in stouts give more room for experimentation. I love making stouts, of all kinds and strengths. I love the smell of dark malts in the mash, the complex aromas throughout the brew day and the richness of the wort. They are worth the extra effort they generally take."

There is no easy answer to what is beer any more. It's a shifting and restless product and culture, a moving target and market, with brewers needing to make beers that sell. Meanwhile, if you have ever asked why beer can't taste like beer, I asked Exale's former head brewer, Daniel Vane, for his thoughts if someone said that to him: "That's fine. Personal choice and opinion are what drives discourse."

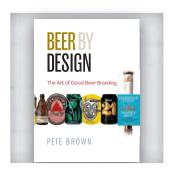


Adrian Tierney-Jones is editor of Beer, In So Many Words - The Best Writing on the Greatest Drink (Safe Haven Books). He tweets at @ATJbeer

and more of his work can be found at maltworms.blogspot.com







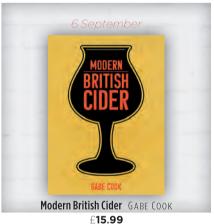


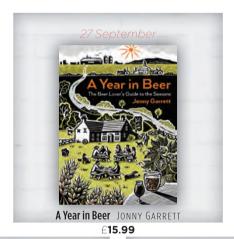
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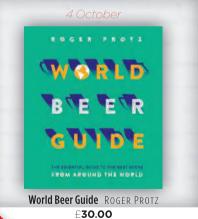
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Beers, boats and belonging

Hollie Stephens celebrates the canalside pubs of Britain, which now host beer lovers and tourists rather than hard-working boatmen

On a warm, cloudless summer's day in the UK, there is no better place than a beer garden, but for me, an ambling stroll along the towpath comes in at a close second. Along my favourite stretch, I'm enveloped by trees, and I can see nothing but blues and greens as the glassy water reflects the clear blue sky

above. At the exact spot that I have in mind, I feel a unique sense of tranquillity. All road traffic is muffled, and the only sounds are birds, the gentle scratches of my boots on the gravel path and sometimes the low, soothing hum of the engine of a canal boat, following me to the next lock.

I think pubs and canals go together perfectly. As a former narrowboater, I may be a little biased, but my love for spending time on the towpath began before I got into boating, when I was living close to the Grand Union Canal. This canal did not originate as a single waterway, but rather, its modern form







is an amalgamation of several. It is the longest canal in the country, and the main line links Birmingham to the Thames at Brentford in west London via miles of gentle meandering through picturesque countryside.

Ask anyone who has ever been a boater and they will tell you about a moment they felt a powerful connection to the water. For me, I was standing outside a pub, the Rising Sun, Herts, with a pint of cask ale in my hand, one evening in late spring. The pub is situated right on the Grand Union Canal, and there is a lock directly in front of the entrance. As a boat entered the lock, I noticed a handful of drinkers waved to the boaters, and someone reached out to take something made of metal from the person stood at the boat's stern. I later

Clockwise from main: Where it started for Hollie - the Rising Sun; the Grand Union Canal stretches for 137 miles; moorings on the Bridgewater Canal

learned this strange object – L-shaped with a square at one end – was called a windlass (or lock key), and is used to operate the locks. I was intrigued by it all – the sense of shared labour and the kindness of helping a passer-by, all while enjoying a pint of Tring brewery beer. Half an hour later, another boat entered the lock, and I asked someone to hold my pint so I could help.

'Ask anyone who has been a boater and they will tell you the moment they felt a powerful connection to the water' Many months later, I'd caught the boating bug. I returned to the same lock aboard my own boat, and I enjoyed another pint in the Rising Sun beer garden after navigating it (with some help from a few other punters, of course).

The construction of the Bridgewater

Canal by engineer James Brindley led to a waterway-building boom in the late 18th century. The first canal boats were drawn by horses, which could move much more weight than they would be able to by cart. The waterways were key to the Industrial Revolution, as they were used to transport coal and other raw materials to factories. By 1850, 4,800 miles of inland waterway had been constructed.

Back when the waterways were critical for transportation, the pubs played a 📭

crucial role as rest points for weary travellers. "The first canalside pubs were farmers selling home-brewed beer, firstly to the navvies digging the canals through their land, and then to the boatmen that followed," says Jonathan Ludford of the Canal & River Trust.

"Waterside pubs were the coaching inns of their day, where horses were baited [fed] or changed, and travellers refreshed or lodged for the night. For working boaters, pubs were a place to tie up, exchange stories, rest and forget the stress of a hard day's work, and would have been a haven of refuge from the overcrowded boat cabin and rowdy children."

Jonathan says pubs might have served multiple functions as important touchpoints for boaters.

"They were the hub of the boaters' community and would often have been a pub, general store and butchers all rolled into one," he says. "Pubs that grew up alongside the canals often reflect this

in their names: the Boat, the Navigation, the Barge or simply the New to distinguish it from the old, established pubs in the area." Today, the UK's canal network is home to more than 2,700 listed structures, 50 scheduled ancient monuments and no less than five UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Stepping inside the Grade II listed

Canalhouse pub in Nottingham for the first time is a unique experience. Across the wooden floorboards, metal railings abut an indoor mooring space. To reach the bar, visitors cross the water over a footbridge, with a view of the resident narrowboats below. "It's definitely a bit of a wow factor," says general manager Wayne Harvey. He tells me the pub gets

"For working boaters, pubs were a place to exchange stories, rest and forget the stress of a hard day's work" a lot of passing trade from tourists on their way to the castle. Wayne explains the site was once owned by Fellows, Morton and Clayton, a haulage company that used the canals to move goods up and down the country. The building the Canalhouse now occupies was used as a warehouse, and a large crane was used to lift heavy loads from the boats that cruised into the space the resident narrowboats now occupy, providing a way to quickly move goods on and off the boats indoors out of the rain. Later, the building housed a canal museum.

Today, the beer garden – once the wharf – is a beautiful spot to sit with a pint. Gerry Mulvaney, who is the chair of the Nottingham Narrowboat Project board of trustees, and one of the skippers, tells me the organisation operates from the wharf and occupies offices upstairs in the Canalhouse building. "Castle Rock brewery is a fantastic host for us," he says. He adds the project provides day







Clockwise from left: Royal Oak in Pencelli, Wales; working the locks at the Admiral Nelson; the Kings Ransom has a prominent spot on the banks of the pioneering Bridgewater Canal



trips, as well as overnight trips, aboard two 70-foot narrowboats seven days a week, for groups from local schools, care homes, charitable organisations and businesses. Gerry and his team are preparing for a busy season, after having a lot of trip plans disrupted last year due to Covid-19. "We're looking forward to getting the boats back up and running," he says. "But what we're really looking forward to most of all is sitting down with a pint of Castle Rock in the sunshine at the end of the trip."

Pubs are at the heart of communities.

and in rural areas they often provide a particularly important role as a meeting place for locals. This is especially true in Pencelli, a small village in Wales, where the family-owned Royal Oak is positioned close to moorings and campsites along the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. Aimee Griffiths, who owns the place along with her husband and parents, tells me the whole family moved to the area from Cardiff to take

over the pub together a few years ago. She says she loves the area and the welcome respite from city life.

"It's absolutely beautiful," she says. "It's invigorating, totally different." She says the pub benefits from plenty of tourist trade thanks to the canal, as well as a fantastic local community. "We've built up a rapport and a bit of a relationship with the regulars. Not just the villagers, but also the boaters."

As I speak with Aimee, I realise rapport is a great word to describe that sense of comfort I've felt in both pub and boating communities, and especially at the intersection of the two. In boating, I found a sense of subtle belonging, which sometimes feels like the only kind that is available to a somewhat socially awkward Brit. I would offer a kindly nod to a not-quite-stranger on the towpath, and a bright smile to the helmsperson at the tiller of a boat travelling the opposite way on a chilly morning. There was something comforting about maintaining a calm familiarity with other canal

residents, just as there was with fellow pub regulars. Feeling part of a community is what makes our pubs what they are, and it is also what keeps our canals welcoming places to be.

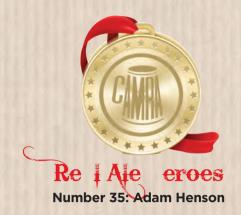
It takes community spirit to maintain

the canals, too. In conjunction with the Canal & River Trust, groups of volunteers work together to maintain their local stretch of canal, by lending a hand with essential upkeep, such as giving lock gates a coat of paint. This sense of community is key to preserving tourism for the canals and the pubs that are close to them, ensuring boaters, beer drinkers and towpath walkers alike will be able to continue to enjoy all they have to offer for many more years to come.



Hollie Stephens is a freelance beer writer. She contributes to publications including Ferment and Pellicle. Follow her on Twitter at @GlobeHops





A rare breed

Adam Henson is a farmer and a Countryfile presenter. He loves real ale and grows the finest malting barley to make it. He also has a beer named in his honour to mark his work in protecting rare species, writes Roger Protz

It's a great honour to have

a beer named after you, but it's important to get the name right. When Adam Henson and Duncan Andrews suggested to Butcombe brewery's Guy Newell that a collaboration beer should be called Muddy Puddle, Guy raised an eyebrow and told them the name should tell potential drinkers it was clear and flavoursome, not thick and rank.

After further thought, the Butcombe brew was labelled Adam Henson's Rare Breed and, in line with Guy's marketing nous, it's a pale ale, crystal clear, without a Wellington boot in sight, but with a White Park rarebreed cow on pump clips and labels.

The 3.8 per cent ABV beer is brewed with Maris Otter pale malt, hopped with Amarillo, Cascade and Fuggles hops, and brewed with spring water that has filtered through the chalk and limestone of the Mendip Hills. Since 2015, Butcombe has been part of the Liberation Group based in the Channel Islands, and Rare Breed remains a regular member of the portfolio.

Adam is Britain's best-known farmer thanks to his appearances on Countryfile



"Dad saw rare breeds as part of our heritage and a genetic resource for the future"

and other TV programmes. Off camera, he and Duncan, his business partner, run the Hensons' 650-hectare Bemborough farm tenancy at Guiting Power in Gloucestershire. The farm is alongside the Cotswold Farm Park that Adam's father Joe launched in 1971. It's open to the public and visitors can see not only life on a working farm, but can also admire the collection of 50 rare breeds of animals and birds.

As a teenager, Adam, now 55, helped on the farm with his three sisters. One of Joe's rare-breed projects was to help with

the protection of North Ronaldsay sheep from the Orkney Islands. These short-tailed sheep have survived in isolation, haven't interbred with other varieties and fed on seaweed. Eight-year-old Adam fondly remembers joining his dad on the trip to buy some of the sheep to bring south to add to his rare-breed collection.

"Dad saw rare breeds as part of our heritage and also as a genetic resource for the future," Adam says. "Today, we continue his legacy of rare-breed conservation and keep

Old Spot and Berkshire pigs, poultry and ducks, Cotswold sheep, Suffolk Punch horses and Exmoor ponies, to mention a few."

Adam also loves real ale - not a rare

breed, perhaps, but certainly part of our heritage. "Dad liked beer. He wasn't a heavy drinker, but he would give the kids a sip. In my teens I would have a small glass and enjoyed it very much. I started to drink in pubs when I was at agricultural college in Devon and then, when I worked on the

B



Above: Adam was impressed by Butcombe's desire for English malt and hops

Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire, I drank mild and bitter, and that's were I discovered Theakston's Old Peculier [5.6 per cent]."

He met Duncan at college and they have been close friends as well as business partners ever since.

The idea for their own beer was the result of the field-to-fork initiative carried out by many farms, which encourages consumers to buy local produce and to appreciate the way in which food is produced.

Adam and Duncan followed a batch of their barley to a malthouse where they studied the several processes the grain goes through to be turned into malt suitable for brewing.

"As a result, Duncan said we should brew our own beer and tell the story of how it's made," Adam says. "We approached a few local brewers and were impressed with Butcombe where Guy was keen to use English malt and hops.

"We discussed flavour and taste. We weren't trying to copy any other beer. I enjoy pale ale and wanted something light and summery. I'm not a fan of heavy, hoppy beers. I prefer a session beer, light and zesty."

The malt comes from Maris Otter barley, some of which is grown on the

Henson farm. The barley is a rare breed – see panel – and Adam was keen to showcase it in his own beer.

"I went to Warminster Maltings in Wiltshire with Countryfile," Adam says. "We met Jonathan Arnold, who runs the maltings, and we agreed a contract for me to supply him with Maris Otter."

While Maris Otter is best known as a grain that grows in East Anglia, with its rich, dark, alluvial soil, Adam says it also grows well in the Cotswolds where the soil is lighter. He admits it's not easy to grow and is less disease resistant than more modern varieties, but it's low in nitrogen – an important consideration as it can lead to hazy beer.

Most importantly, artisan brewers prefer it to other varieties, as it works in harmony with yeast and creates beers with a delightful bouquet of honey and freshly baked bread.



Above: Adam with farmer father Joe



Following agricultural college, Adam and Duncan toured Australia and New Zealand, where they worked on arable farms and sheep stations. They returned home via the US and Canada, and in all four countries they sampled the local beers. Down under, Adam says, New Zealand had a better range of ales than Australia.

In 1999, they took over the Cotswold

farm from Joe, and two years later, Adam joined Countryfile as a presenter. As well as farming, Adam has thespian roots. His grandfather, Leslie Henson, was a celebrated actor and comedian both sides of World War II, and he helped create the Entertainments National Service Association, which arranged concerts for British troops stationed abroad during the war.

Leslie's sons were Joe and Nicky, and while Joe went into farming, Nicky became a successful actor whose career ranged from Shakespeare to EastEnders, with Fawlty Towers and Inspector Morse in between.

Joe was no stranger to TV, either. He appeared with Angela Rippon and Phil Drabble on country programmes, and it was not too surprising that Adam took to

Performing for the cameras is in the blood



the cameras like a heritage duck to water. He has also written five books, including A Year on Adam's Farm for children, and is planning further books – "though people are surprised that a farmer can write!".

In common with farmers and brewers, the Cotswold Farm Park was closed for many months in 2020 as a result of the pandemic and lockdown. The trigger for this article was seeing Adam on Countryfile helping load barley into a barn on his farm and saying: "This will go to make wonderful real ale."

Then came the pandemic and cask ale took the biggest hit in the brewing industry. "Real ale is a rare breed," Adam says. "With the footfall in pubs down or non-existent, it's had a terrible time." He is impressed by the way Butcombe, in common with brewers throughout the country, rallied to support pubs by buying back unsold beer and helping publicans develop take-home services.

Like the sheep on Orkney, cask ale will survive and thrive with the enthusiastic support of farmers such as Adam growing the finest malting barley.

 Cotswold Farm Park, Guiting Power, nr Cheltenham, Glos. cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk 'Joe was no stranger to TV, either. It was not too surprising that Adam took to the cameras like a heritage duck to water'

THE MAGIC OF MARIS: A barley made for brewing is now one of the most wanted

Maris Otter is indeed a rare breed – a barley created solely for brewing. Most barleys are also used for animal feed, malted foodstuffs and even some cheap instant coffees. The grain was created in 1966 and was a cross between two existing varieties, Pioneer and Proctor.

It became the leading barley variety for the brewing industry, but it was delisted in the 1980s when new 'high-yielding' varieties were developed. High yielding means growing more barley per acre and more profitable as a result. A number of brewers, notably Young's in London, remained true to Maris Otter, even though it had to have it specially grown and paid a premium price.

In 1992, two leading seed merchants, Robin Appel in Wiltshire and H Banham in Norfolk, bought the exclusive rights to Maris Otter. They 'cleaned it up', improved its growing potential and turned it into one of the most sought-after malting barleys in the world. As well as British artisan brewers. a number

of American craft producers import the grain, especially when producing IPAs.

Specialist maltsters, such as Crisp in Norfolk and Warminster in Wiltshire, turn Maris Otter into malt by using the traditional floor process. This is labour-intensive: the grain is laid on heated floors and turned by hand every few hours. But both maltsters and brewers believe this creates the sweetest malt, ideal for mashing and fermenting.

The proof can be seen in the fact that 13 out of the last 20 winners of CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain award have been brewed with Maris Otter, including Surrey Hills Shere Drop (4.2 per cent ABV) in 2019.

And Warminster
Maltings reported
growing the biggest
acreage ever of Maris
Otter in 2020.

Below: Multiple champion Maris Otter barley



When beer was the healthy option

How a long-lost London brewery played a small part in ending an epidemic

On the last day of August, 1854,

several cholera cases were recorded in the Soho parish of St James's, notably in around Broad Street (today's Broadwick Street). Just three days later, 127 people had died from the disease, and by 10 September, deaths had exceeded 500.

Enter stage left a young doctor called John Snow. The widely held belief at the time was that cholera was an airborne disease, but John was convinced otherwise and noted almost all the Soho cholera cases centred on a solitary water pump in Broad Street.

Furthermore, residents at a nearby workhouse, with its own well, were largely untouched by cholera, as were the 70-strong workforce at a nearby brewery where, according to John, "the men were allowed a certain quantity of malt liquor" and did "not drink water at all". Proof, perhaps, that beer really can be beneficial to your health. The brewery in question was Huggins.

John encouraged the authorities to remove the Broad Street pump's handle and cases soon quickly fell. Further investigation revealed that a cesspit had been leaking into the pump. John has, subsequently, gone down in medical history, even having a Soho pub named in his honour, but poor old Huggins & Co has been largely forgotten. Which is a shame, because its history is fascinating—it is mentioned by Dickens

as Broadwood, Mundell and Huggins in Nicholas Nickleby – although its demise sadly typical.

In 1801, William Thomas Stretton started a small brewery in Broad Street, just yards from the



Left: Lion brewery, Soho, pictured in 1920, was replaced by a police section house and is now a block of flats

'While it did brew porter and stout, it was regarded as one of the "principal ale producers"

parish pump. The company behind the Lion Brewhouse would have many trading names over many often troubled years. In 1835, a disagreement saw one of the partners leave to set up his own rival brewery in Lambeth, taking the Lion brewery name with him.

Back in Soho, by 1850, the Huggins

family had taken control and the company continued to trade under a variety of different names. The brewery now occupied most of the south side of Broad Street between Hopkins Street and New Street (today's Ingestre Place).

In 1896, The International Brewers'

Journal reported Huggins had

"capital of £1,400,000".

Huggins was noted for the clarity of its "fine ale, table ale and table beer". While it did brew some porter and stout, for a time it was regarded as one of

the capital's 'principal ale producers', one ad celebrating "the beer that's clear".

In 1928, Huggins & Co was acquired by Watney, Combe and Reid. With its huge Stag brewery in Pimlico still active, Watney had no interest in continuing production in Soho or continuing to produce the Huggins range of beers. What Watney did get, however, was 100 London pubs, including the Bunch of Grapes in Brompton Road and Cross Keys in Covent Garden.

The brewery in Soho then stood empty for several years before demolition in 1937. It was replaced with the monolithic Trenchard House, a Metropolitan Police section house. On the site today stands a block of modern flats. The John Snow pub, however, remains as a lasting testament to a fascinating chapter in Soho history.



Johnny Homer is an author, journalist and broadcaster. His latest book is *Brewing in London*. He works in communications for Shepherd Neame

Why pubs matter in the UK

Pubs Matter is a campaign to get everyone talking about why pubs and social clubs across the UK are a force for good

It's about community

The pub has long been a mainstay of British high streets and communities. However, in recent years, the local has adapted to become much more than just that.

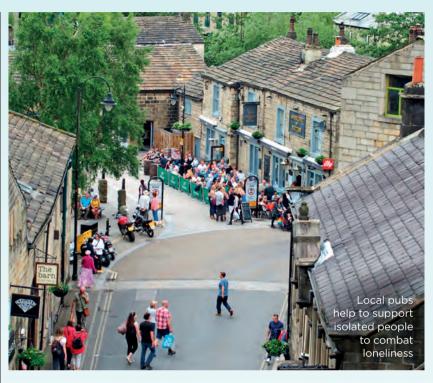
There are hundreds of examples of local pubs that have opened as a post office, greengrocer or library, and in doing so have transformed the lives of thousands of local residents at a time. Moreover, pubs raise more than £100m for hundreds of charities and worthy causes, and provide a further £40m in funding or in-kind support for grassroots sport.

All of this is at stake with so many pubs on the brink of failure as a result of months of enforced closure or unreasonably tight restrictions.

It's about mental health

For some people, the loss of a local pub isn't just the loss of a local small business, it means the loss of their social network.

Loneliness is a scourge that blights many communities up and down the country, but this is also something that pubs have helped to fix. Countless locals



'Locals have started social clubs for isolated or traditionally hard-toreach groups of people'

across the UK have started social clubs for isolated or traditionally hard-to-reach groups of people. The ongoing closure of pubs means that for these groups the pandemic has been especially hard to cope with.

It's about local economies

The social cohesion that pubs provide for society is absolutely vital, but so is the economic contribution they make. Pubs, and the brewers that supply them, provide £23bn in value added to the UK economy each year, supporting 900,000 jobs – over 40% of which are occupied by people under the age of 25.

This is at risk if we don't act now to start enabling publicans to get back to what they do best.

About the campaign

Pubs Matter is a campaign to get everyone talking about why pubs and social clubs across the UK are a force for good. We want to shout from the rooftops about why pubs matter to people and communities.

Anyone who loves their local is encouraged to share why #PubsMatter to them on social media and contact their MP, using resources at whypubsmatter.org.uk

PUBS MATTER. The organisations behind Pubs Matter represent people who love pubs - the people who run them, the people who brew beer for them and, most importantly, the people and communities who use them. Partner organisations:
CAMRA, British Beer and
Pub Association, British
Institute of Innkeeping,
The Independent Family
Brewers of Great Britain,
Society of Independent
Brewers and UKHospitality.
#PubsMatter

Fantasy screen shots

Trapped at home during the lockdown, comedian **James Dowdeswell** reviewed some of his favourite fictional on-screen pubs

Nag's Head (Only Fools and Horses)

Nag's Head, Peckham, London

This pub makes me smile just thinking about it. It is a typical south-east London boozer, but it is the humour of the locals that make it.

The pub has mostly resisted gentrification and is still fairly old school in its layout with a bar, poker room and a function space for celebrations.

Mike Fisher presides back behind the bar after coming out of retirement. It wasn't the same without him. He has a few classic beers on handpump:

Trotter's Independent Pale Ale

(4.5 per cent ABV) – very popular, despite being hit and miss, as most of it was bought as short-dated stock, so no one ever knows how old it is.

Trigger's Brown Broom Ale (3.8 per cent) – wonderful character and a bit nutty. Interestingly, the pub has used the same handpump for 20 years. That old pump has had 17 new handles and 14 heads in its time.

Peckham Plonker (5.6 per cent) – a premium-strength bitter with pleasant, subtle undertones and a delightfully sweet finish.

Driscoll Brothers Stout (6.8 per cent) – a heavy beer and an acquired taste. It can't be put on the slate and has to be paid on time.

One of Mickey Pearce's mates started Cushty Craft Brewery and sells three of its beers to the Nag's Head: Lovely Jubbly Juice (6.4 per cent) – Del Boy's favourite 'crafty beer'. This tropical IPA is like a pina colada in a beer can. Del insists on a hard pour and drinks it in a mug with a handle, as he claims, like all the trendy Peckham Crafty Hopsters do.

Mange Tout Mange Tout (7.2 per cent) – this hazy IPA tastes like a green juice bomb. New England IPA colliding with Paris and Peckham. Not for the fainthearted, but, as they say, 'he who dares'. Rodney, You DIPA Stick (8 per cent) – a double India pale ale that occasionally goes by the name Dave.

Despite modern brews on offer, this boozer is full to the brim of 1980s nostalgia, and I loved revisiting.



Above: Young Jim and a pirate outside *Treasure Island*'s Admiral Benbow



Admiral Benbow (Treasure Island)

Admiral Benbow, Black Hill Cove, near Kitt's Cove

A simple inn with a curious history. Any doubts of authenticity are removed when you spy the notch in the pub sign from the very cutlass of Captain Flint's first mate, Billy Bones, while attacking Black Dog that fateful day.

Before entering, it's hard not to tap on the door like Blind Pew. Inside, there are two rooms: a bar and a parlour to rest in by the open fire. There are also lodgings upstairs. True pirate crime enthusiasts may wish to stay in the room where Bones perished.



The landlords, Jim Hawkins and his mother, are very hospitable. Young Jim is not only a good listener, but has many a seafaring tale of his own.

The bar is well stocked and teeming with rum bottles. There's Captain Flint, Bristol Pistol and Hispaniola Club. However, it's not just a pirate beach bar – there's also a plethora of beer bottles and barrels on offer: Long John Silver Pirate IPA (6.1 per cent) – a single-hop beer, but no less devastating. This is a split personality brew, with a mixture of British and American hops, and a bitterness that cuts through the initial sweetness, leaving a long, intriguing aftertaste. Plank Walking March Ale (4.4 per

cent) - beautifully balanced. Brewed

at the end of March, the best brewing season. Accompanying snacks should be sweet, rather than salty.

Dead Men Don't Bite Bitter (3.8 per cent) – a life-affirming wheat beer. **Black Spotted Buccaneer** (6 per cent) – a West Indies porter, matured in rum barrels and imported across the seas.

Pieces of Eight Mate (5 per cent) – an amber lager.

Cutlass or Cut Loose (5.5 per cent) – a steely citrus-infused real cider.

'The soft drink options are water, Anti-Scurvy Orange Juice and Yo Ho Ho Cola served with a bottle of rum' **Above:** The Trotter brothers at the Nag's Head in *Only Fools and Horses*

15% On a Dead Man's Chest (15 per cent) – an Imperial IPA. Often shared during sea shanties and toasts.

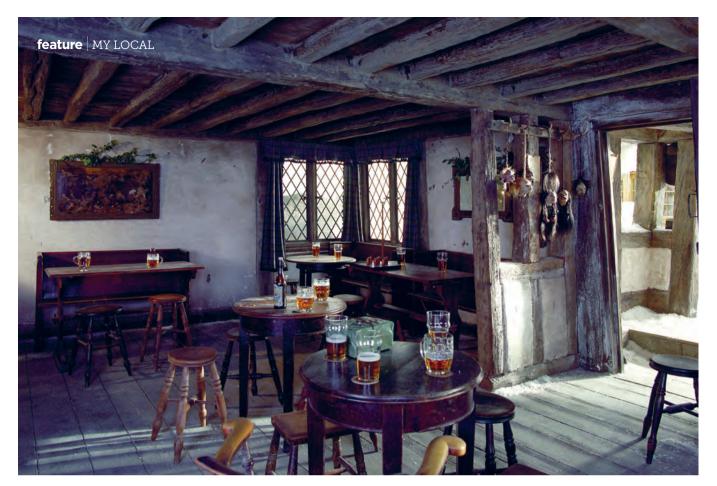
Jim Hawkins' Ale of Adventure

(4.1 per cent) – a mild ale, home brewed by the landlord. An easy-drinking fireside winter warmer.

The soft drink options are water, Anti-Scurvy Orange Juice and Yo Ho Ho Cola served with a bottle of rum.

I would happily revisit any time – apart from 19 September, because that's International Talk Like a Pirate Day.

And you can have too much of a good thing, matey.



Leaky Cauldron (Harry Potter)

Leaky Cauldron, 1 Diagon Alley, Charing Cross Road, London

The legendary Leaky Cauldron is the oldest pub in London, founded by Daisy Dodderidge in 1500, and acts as a gateway from the non-wizarding world of Charing Cross Road to Diagon Alley.

This historic pub and traveller's rest is a purveyor of the finest beverages.

Wizarding aficionados are often drawn to **Butter Beer** (3 per cent). This foaming alcopop tastes like cream soda, topped with very thick butterscotch-infused whipped cream. A must for those with a sweet tooth and very popular with Hogwarts students. The only Muggles to come close to this recipe would be Tiny Rebel.

Innkeeper Tom keeps a good cellar. There are the recognised beers, such as **Wizard's Brew Stout** (5.7 per cent) and **Dragon Scale** (5.3 per cent). According to fans, Dragon Scale is said to be "a beer that starts off as an ale and ends up as a lager". This would be Russian Roulette

for many, but perfect for those forgetful types who mess up their drinks order.

I'm sure CAMRA members would rejoice in the rarer revolving guest ales: **Hoppy Pewter Pale Ale** (4.5 per cent) – brewed to commemorate victory in the Second Wizarding War. A real favourite with Quidditch fans, and as smooth as a ride on the Nimbus 2000.

Dragon Fire Mountain Ale

(8.5 per cent) – a real showstopper. This smoky, red ale bursts into flames on your first sip. A true winter warmer, which loses none of its alcohol through fire. Novices may need a gillywater to hand.

Sour Smiling Slytherin

(5.6 per cent) – try saying that after a few! A sour beer. Tart, with gooseberry and Brussels sprout overtones. Be warned: a few of these may give you the Dark Arts!

'The famous wizard Harry Potter was said to have boarded in Room 11 after arriving by Knight Bus in 1993' **Above:** The gateway to Harry Potter's wizarding world: the Leaky Cauldron

Wolfsbane Special Moon Brew

(12 per cent) – a Russian imperial stout and a favourite of werewolves.

Polyjuice Perry Cider (14.9 per cent)

 conjured from fermented pears foraged in the Enchanted Forest, it is so strong it can turn you inside out.

House Elf Bitter (3.5 per cent) – unfortunately best avoided, as it tastes of old socks.

The pub's decor is dark and drab, but given its need for secrecy, fitting. Despite the shabby surroundings, there are more comfortable rooms

upstairs. Indeed, the famous wizard Harry Potter was said to have boarded in Room 11 after arriving by Knight Bus in 1993.

Out back is a chilly courtyard, with two entrances, one to Diagon Alley, one to Knockturn Alley. On my visit, I was confused, so I popped back inside for directions, and another pint of Hoppy Pewter ensued.



Crow (Withnail & I)

Shap, near Penrith, Cumbria

A cult classic and popular destination for drinkers and drama students. The Crow perches just west of the A6, near Shap, about 15 miles south of Penrith. It might be an accidental find, as I overheard a few people giggling and declaring they had: "Gone on holiday by mistake."

Once found, there are plenty of wonderful beers to delve into:

Withnail's Wandering Star (5.6 per cent) – this premium bitter is beautifully refreshing, and apt, after climbing the steep slopes of Haweswater Reservoir, shouting the immortal line: "I'm gonna be a star!" Although you might prefer Marwood's Mild (3.8 per cent) – a delightful session beer.

There are a number of craft ales, brewed locally:

Uncle Monty's Cottage (9.2 per cent) – a fruity little number and Belgian in style.

Gone on Holiday by Mistake (5.6 per cent) – a moreish
American Pale Ale.

Are You the Farmer? (5 per

cent) – a dry-hopped lager and popular with visiting urban types.

Your Hops are Your Aerials (7.2 per cent) – a hazy New England classic.

The pub is also known for its cider. The two on tap are **Withnail's Vintage Cider** (5 per cent) – medium dry and served with ice, plus, for the more rambunctious, is **Scrubbers Rough Cider** (8.2 per cent). These are often accompanied with a shot or two or Actor's Ruin Gin.

Completing the pick of the top shelf are the landlord's favourites: Colonel's Red Nose Rum and Services Man Whisky.

For those not imbibing, try the Camberwell Carrot Juice from young entrepreneur Danny, the drink dealer.



'Food is simple country fare: chicken, rabbit and pheasant. Look out for the chef's special: With Eel an' Pie'

Some add shots of vodka, which makes it into a Bloody Danny cocktail.

The brief wine list boasts some of the finest wines: a '53 Margaux.

Food is simple country fare: chicken, rabbit and pheasant. Look out for the chef's special: With Eel an' Pie. The fish is all locally sourced from Jake's Lake.

I received a welcoming reception from the old-school landlord, ex-army, who has been there for years. The atmosphere among the locals is mostly friendly, and some of them even serve themselves.

It's an old-school country pub, frayed around the edges, which merely adds to its charm. The decor is rustic with old, wooden furniture. The stone floor is fine for muddy boots and ramblers can toast their feet by the roaring fire. This pub is part of the community, and its lifeline, besides local farmers, is tourists, who seem to love taking constant selfies.

Only popped in for one and I stayed long into the night. A memorable pub. Although many of us might claim to have initially gone by mistake, I would definitely return.



James Dowdeswell is a stand-up comedian and actor, best known for playing the character of Count Fuckula in the BBC programme Extras. James

is also an author and wrote *The Pub Manifesto: A Comedian Stands Up for Pubs*, which was published by CAMRA Books in November 2018

Joys of the black stuff

Jeff Evans investigates how a recreation became a classic that started with a bang

When Courage ended production of

its Imperial Russian Stout (10 per cent ABV) in the early 1990s, the future for historic strong stouts looked bleak. There were one or two hefty dark beers still on the market, but none was quite as big, potent or complex enough to compare with the beer that the imperial Russian court took to its heart during the 18th century. Fortunately, the situation improved at the end of the decade, when arguably the most authentic recreation of this style emerged from Harvey's brewery in Sussex.

In 1998, head brewer Miles Jenner was approached by a US importer keen to offer a beer that was as true to the imperial Russian stout style as possible. The story of Albert Le Coq was discussed, the 19th-century Prussian businessman who marketed the Courage stout when it was brewed by Barclay Perkins in Southwark and whose company later opened its own brewery in Tartu (now in Estonia) to brew the product nearer its Russian target market.

The Tartu brewery was happy to contribute to the project, as long as the beer was brewed by a small, independent brewery well versed in the techniques of brewing porter. Harvey's, already known for its 1859 Porter (4.8 per cent), was an ideal match.

Some information about the recipe was provided by Tartu, but the exact ingredients and processes remained vague, so Miles supplemented this basic knowledge with discussions with brewers who recalled brewing the beer in the 1950s at Barclay Perkins where, conveniently and coincidentally, the brewing water closely matched that at Harvey's in Lewes. He finally settled on a recipe based on 62.5 per cent pale ale malt and 37.5 per cent coloured malts – a mix of amber, brown and black.

To boost the fermentability, invert sugar was added to the copper, and an original gravity of 1106 was targeted. Fuggle and Goldings were selected as the hop varieties and these were added hourly during a three-hour boil at a rate of 6lb per

barrel – seven times the hop rate enjoyed by Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter (4 per cent).

Harvey's own yeast was used for fermentation with the wort intensively aerated during the first couple of days. When primary fermentation ended, the beer registered 8.7 per cent, which then rose to above 9 per cent

during nine months of secondary fermentation in tank, during which time the bitterness of the beer reduced dramatically, from 122 EBU to below 50.

For authenticity, it was decided the

bottles should be corked, and so packaging was entrusted to Gale's in Horndean, Hants, which already produced its Prize Old Ale (9 per cent) in a corked bottle. The product was finally released, named Imperial Extra Double Stout (IEDS; 9 per



'After nine months, the beer burst into life, generating vast quantities of carbon dioxide that needed daily venting'

cent) and shipped to the US in 2000. It proved to be an immediate hit. A few months later, however, something odd started to happen. The corks in the bottles began to rise, putting pressure on the foil seals. When the seals were removed, the result was explosive. The next brew was already in tank, so Miles decided to condition this for a longer period and monitor the impact this had on the beer. He discovered that, after nine months, the beer suddenly burst into life, generating vast quantities of carbon dioxide that needed daily venting.

The cause of this late revival was discovered to be a wild yeast that carried on the fermentation after the main one had exhausted itself. "A volcano was smouldering," says Miles. "After what one might call a pregnant pause of nine months, the beer sprung to life and underwent a startling secondary





Clockwise from top left: Head brewer Miles Jenner; dark delights created at Harvey's brewery; start a voyage of discovery with a glass of IEDS



fermentation." The intrusive yeast was eventually identified as a strain known as *Debaryomyces hansenii*, which Miles assumed was present in very low numbers in the Harvey's yeast strain. By allowing this interloper to have its say and then quietly retreat, he was able to bottle the beer without fear of any more nasty surprises when it was opened.

With the closure of Gale's brewery

in 2006, Miles decided to bring bottling in-house. The beer is still bottle-conditioned as before, but is now packaged in a 275ml bottle with

a crown cap. This has certainly not diminished the product, which has picked up no end of top awards.

IEDS is an intense beer. The flavours are huge and varied, mixing chocolate truffle, coffee, leather and liquorice from the roasted malts with a peppery warmth from fermentation, while the wild yeast that once wreaked havoc in the beer adds another dimension. Miles suggests the taste is 'sweet and sour', and you may see what he means if you also sample the brewery's other award-winning

strong stout, Prince of Denmark (7.5 per cent), which he nicknames IEDS Nouveau. This is produced to the same basic recipe, but it is not matured at the brewery, and is chilled, filtered and pasteurised before going on sale.

"The conditioning period separates IEDS from Prince of Denmark and is fundamental in developing the historical character of a stored stout," Miles explains. "The low levels of wild yeast and bacteria develop the slightly

sour element over time."

Opening a bottle of IEDS is always a voyage of discovery, one that in sensory terms mirrors the real journey beers like this once made across the icy Baltic. It also provides a portal into the past,

delivering a rare insight into the comforting aromas, flavours, textures and warmth the Russians may have once experienced as they supped this heady brew on dark, wintry nights in St Petersburg.





Above: Spectacular views across the conservatory for diners at Wetherspoon's sensational Imperial in Exeter

The great outdoors

Susan Nowak puts on a ski jacket to discover the appeal of eating outside - whatever the weather

Boris Johnson managed

to make the April reopening of pubs and restaurants "for outdoor service only" entwined in rules and regulations sound a bit bleak. But with much of the summer still ahead, now seems a good time to celebrate pub garden cuisine.

Those of us used to crowding the bar, then finding a cosy nook to huddle with our pint may fail to glance though the window to a blooming beyond. But since the pandemic, licensees have become space savvy.

Down here, in the South West, one local chain immediately glamourised outside eating with a joyous invitation to al fresco dining on a waterfront pontoon.

"I feel very positive today. We are round the corner and on the start of a new road," Mitch Tonks, owner of the eight-strong Rockfish group, told me on the Monday diners could return – so long as they ate outside.

The hospitality sector invested an estimated £285m nationwide on a grand reopening, and Mitch had spent a tidy sum readying his eight seafood restaurants, with the support of partner Salcombe brewery.

But Mitch, also author of six fish recipe books (the latest, *The Rockfish Cookbook*, is out now) and a TV chef, regarded it money well spent, not just to welcome back diners, but because he intends the new open-air facilities at all his restaurants to be permanent fixtures.

"This will go right through until October now and in the future, and that's been one of our objectives. I think the government has relaxed things a little bit and local councils are allowing outside openings, and that is really good," he said.

A fair proportion of the fish served in his restaurants comes from Brixham fish market augmented by their own trawler, *Rockfisher*. Mitch is also an ambassador for the Marine Stewardship Council, promoting sustainably sourced seafood.

During lockdown, Rockfish

began home deliveries of 'seafood experience boxes', with orders reaching 400-500 a week. A typical selection is Dover sole with seaweed butter, Brixham crab thermidor and smoked salmon, plus recipes. "We are making that much bigger with a nationwide technology platform," he said.

Next day, I went to taste for myself at my local Rockfish. The restaurant itself, described as 'New England-style beach shack', was undergoing an ambitious

'One local chain immediately glamourised outside eating with a joyous invitation to al fresco dining on a waterfront pontoon'

makeover. Outside, I could already see changes – increased capacity with extensive new decking, half the outside dining space in the open, the rest under a transparent ceiling, and a terrace bar.

When you read this, the main restaurant with its extensive menu of fish such as hake, turbot, gurnard, lobster, sole and monkfish, plus starters and desserts, will have reopened. But the two of us were perfectly happy with the Deck Menu, nibbling Seville olives, sweet chilli peppers and half a pint of shell-on Norwegian prawns. Then chef Connor delivered an exceptional piece of cod, a thick cut of beautifully white loin in (secret recipe) batter, almost tempura in its crispiness. And you can choose regular or gluten-free.

Naturally, we drank beer and cider – from local Salcombe brewery – with our fish. Mitch said: "We love Salcombe's nice, hoppy flavours – beer is best with fish and chips; we sell a lot."

Brewery founder and chairman John Tiner, who worked with Mitch on the new outside space and has a bigger bar in the renovated restaurant, says he's been exclusive supplier to the chain for some years. The restaurant serves Pilsner (5.4 per cent ABV), Pale Ale (4.6 per cent), Gold IPA (4.2 per cent) and Ocean Cider (4.5 per cent).

It's an interesting brewery, built on a decommissioned reservoir site, which provides perfect storage temperature.

"We hoped it would be a bit like a wine cellar – brew on top and then drop down into casks, which is what happened," said John, whose Island Street Porter (5.9 per cent), matured in Speyside whisky casks, was named national champion at last year's SIBA awards. Sales of its Lifesaver bitter (4.8 per cent) contribute to supporting Salcombe RNLI, while its 'complex yet subtle' best bitter Seahorse (4.4 per cent) donates to the Seahorse Trust. "There's a very rare breed in the bay," said John.

In CAMRA's home city,

Good Beer Guide entry the Lower Red Lion has a suntrap 90-foot beer garden below St Albans Abbey. It is well used as an eating area, with marquees for events such as its summer beer festival. After the April outside-only reopening, chef/proprietor David Worcester served a short menu, including his popular haddock in Erdinger

wheat beer batter with double-fried chips, and homemade steak burgers in brioche bun with red onion marmalade, but by now his fuller menu should have resumed. His regular beer is Tring's Side Pocket for a Toad (3.6 per cent), plus ales from the 3 Brewers of St Albans. "They've been sensational to pubs during lockdown," David said. (Children not admitted.)

Also sensational are the orangery and gardens at Wetherspoon's Grade II listed Imperial, in Exeter. Built in 1810 as Elmfield House, it was purchased in 1897 by

SALCOMBE

Dr William Buller Henderson, who added a spectacular conservatory with a 30-foothigh semicircular window overlooking a garden and woodland with rare plants, pond and fountain. This outside space can accommodate 780 people, but there were still lengthy queues on the first two days of restricted reopening.

It makes sense for pubs to

use gardens to boost income following all the lost trade of lockdown. Perhaps provide a few outside treats for kids like a little sandpit, slide or giant

snakes and ladders.

A couple of gazebos or big umbrellas will create shade if it gets too hot. As well as taking trays of food from the pub kitchen, why not create some outside? Maybe a barbecue, pig roast,

facilities for families to bring their own picnic. Invite street-food outfits on-site. While you won't get paid for these eats, you won't have to buy ingredients and cook them either, but you'll sell plenty of drinks. I saw lots of pubs with outside marquees during lockdown; use a small one for a self-service buffet.

Most important, make sure you've got real ales not available in supermarkets during lockdown, and serve them in tip-top condition.



Clockwise from top: Tempting Rockfish seafood with Salcombe beer; server James Williams; chef Connor with fish and chips; Georgia Hodd delivers a burger with a fishy twist









Susan Nowak writes CAMRA's Good Pub Food, and has made many TV and radio appearances

talking about pub food and cooking with beer

Czech mates with cheese

Unable to travel to the Czech Republic, **Tim Hampson** enjoys a virtual tasting of three Budvar beers with English craft cheeses

"In 200 days, people can learn

a new language. It takes 200 days to mature Budvar Reserve," says Budvar's Radim Zvánovec.

Radim is the newly appointed brand ambassador for the fiercely independent Czech brewer, based in the small South Bohemian town of Ceske Budejovice. His mission is to get people to talk about the company's beers, in whatever language they want to use. But most of all, he wants people to talk beer.

The pandemic has restricted the amount of travelling he can do. In more normal times he would be crisscrossing across Europe championing the company's beers.

Today, he is undertaking a cheese and beer pairing: from the historic brewery using three of the company's beers, with a trio of artisanal cheeses from south-west England.

Radim says: "Czech beer has a long history and Budvar and the city of Budweis in Bohemia have had their part to play."

He is steeped in the story of the Czech Republic or "beer republic" as he prefers, and its relationship with beer – ancient and modern.

He describes how, in 1265, the town of Ceske Budejovice, better known to the world by the German version of its name – Budweis – was founded by Dominican monks and given the right to brew beer by King Otakar II, the King of Bohemia.

He is equally proud of the fact that Budweiser Budvar isn't the only brewery in the republic. The Czechs can lay claim to more than 500 breweries, big and small, brewing not only classic Bohemian lager, but also embracing a brave new world of beer.

Aromatic New World-hopped ales, American-style IPAs and barrel-aged beers are all made in the Czech

Republic. Czechs, he says, are just as interested in the flavours of beer from further afield as in their traditional brews.

He has chosen three beers for his tasting. Budvar Original, at 5 per cent ABV, Budvar Reserve (7.5 per cent) and Budvar Dark, also known as

Tmavý(4.7 per cent).



as is cheese. To make beer a microbe, yeast is needed. Milk usually comes from a cow or sheep, where it has been created from microbes in the animal's guts.

Left: Budweiser Budvar's iconic, world-class pilsner



Beer goes surprisingly well with cheese – better, in fact, than wine, according to many. Beer's freshness, carbonation and complex taste notes make it perfect for serving with a cheese platter.

But people still ask: "Beer and cheese? What's that all about?"

There are those who think cheese should only be served with red wine. Others, especially TV presenters on food shows, sing the praises of white wine as the best accompaniment to cheese, because its crisp sweetness brings out the flavours.

The world of beer and cheese awaits these folk.

When people begin exploring the pairing of beer with cheese, a world of experiences awaits. It's a journey more



Above: Smooth and elegant **Budvar Reserve**

Left: Perfect beer companion - Czech marinated cheese

should take and discover what beer and cheese pairings suit their personal tastes.

Ask yourself the questions: do you like the cheese and beer to taste similar? Or do you prefer divergent flavours that complement each other? Both can be quite delicious.

Mild cheeses usually go well with mild beers. A beer should never stifle the cheese with alcohol, strong flavours or a lot of hops.

However, riper and richer cheeses can handle a stronger beer and a higher level of alcohol. A full-bodied, matured cheese often goes well with a more robust beer.

The link between beer and cheese is enhanced because many of the makers and brewers are small artisanal producers driven by passion, a stubborn independence coupled with a refusal to do something because it is the cheapest way to do it and their accountant would recommend it. Being small also helps unleash strong innovative and independent streaks, which we should salute.

Budvar Original is the brewery's flagship pale lager. It is a true lager and and driven by passion'

a remarkable beer. It is hopped with the whole cones of Saaz hops and conditioned for at least 90 days.

The resulting beer is well-attenuated, golden and clear, with less malt impact than many other Bohemian pilsners. It has a wonderful flowery nose from the Czech-grown Saaz hops.

The beer is paired with an awardwinning washed-rind cheese made with Wyfe of Bath curds. The cheese is pressed and washed in an artisanal cider every other day for four weeks.

Stinking Bishop is probably the best example of an English washed-rind cheese. The name of the cheese doesn't refer to an unpleasant whiff, as you might expect, but is the name of the pear variety in the perry used to wash it.

Like many things cheese-related, the practice of washing rinds started in France, where 16th-century monks used to make cheeses. The cool conditions in monastery cellars were ideal for cheese bacteria, but because the conditions weren't easily controlled, they were more liable to develop bad rinds.

To avoid this, the monks used to wash the cheese rinds with whatever they had to hand – often this was beer or brandy, as it was more plentiful than clean water that could be used for drinking.

tasting | BUDVAR BUDDIES

Washing the cheese in cider makes the rind of the cheese a better, more hospitable medium for bacteria to thrive in. Usually the most notable of these is *Brevibacterium linens*, but there are many others and these are the bacteria that give washed-rind cheeses their distinctive orange-red hue, as well as that pungent, farmyard smell. They might smell dangerous or dubious, but they are anything but.

The bacteria also help create slightly yeasty flavours, which duet beautifully with those tones in the beer.

Remember: the rind of the cheese is also edible. Do not throw it away.



elegant Budvar
Reserve is paired with Devon
Blue. It is one of three cheeses made by
Ben Harris and his team at Ticklemore
Cheese Dairy in Totnes, Devon.

Ben's cheesemaking inspiration is the British blue cheese pioneer Robin Congdon. He created Beenleigh Blue, a sheep's milk cheese inspired by Roquefort, but he wanted to supplement this with a cow's milk so it could be made all year round. This gets round the times when sheep's milk was difficult to source.

The milk, which comes from a cooperative that gathers the white gold from several farms within a 10-mile radius, is sourced to fit in with the more seasonal production of the dairy's other cheeses. After being shaped into a round and pierced to allow the blue mould to form, the cheese is wrapped in foil to prevent a rind developing. The result is sweet with a caramelly note, and a light spicing can be detected.

The cheese exudes the richness and sweetness of cow's milk, but is flinty, minerally and light, being aged for four

Right: Budvar Dark was added to the range in 2004





Left: Perry-washed Stinking Bishop **Top left:** Semi-hard Rachel goat's cheese **Top right:** Foil-wrapped Devon Blue

months. Older batches mature out

to become even creamier and stronger in flavour.

Its fudgy texture is the perfect foil for the Reserve. The 200 days of maturation releases a honeyed complexity layered with elegant bitter notes from the Saaz hops, which harmonises with the sweet tangy flavours in the cheese. The sum of the parts is greater than the richness of the individual components.

Budvar Dark was added to the brewery's repertoire in 2004; prior to this, it was

predominately a pale-beer brewery. In addition to the Munich malt, caramel and roasted malts are used. Deep amber in colour, it looks black in the glass. The aroma summons notes of sweet cola and sugary, ginger spice with a herbal finish.

It is paired with Rachel goat's cheese – not a typical goat's cheese. Made by the White Lake Dairy with unpasteurised milk and vegetarian rennet, it is a semi-hard cheese that is matured for a full 12 months.

A favourite for any lover of melted cheese, it has a warm, reddish-orange colour on the crust. The cheese is regularly washed with brine, which creates its semi-hard feature. The technique is more widely used for cow's milk cheeses. The texture is firm and springy with a pale colour. The flavour is not overly goaty. This makes it a favourite with those who are not too keen on the acerbic, farmy nature of some goat's cheese.

The sweetness of the cheese pairs well with the malt nuttiness of the beer.

With the tasting over, Radim is

adamant nothing should go to waste. He suggests making a marinated cheese, a typical Czech bar snack.

Any remaining cheese is chopped into cubes and mixed with a couple of cloves of chopped garlic and a small onion. A chopped chilli pepper and a gherkin can be added. Also consider spices, such as coriander. Mix with olive oil and put into a small storage jar. Top up with oil and put in a fridge for four or five days. When you want to try it, allow the jar to warm to room temperature. Spoon the mixture onto bread or a cracker, and enjoy.

"Na zdraví, užívejte si," says Radim.

 All cheeses were supplied by the Bristol Cheesemonger.



Tim Hampson is a former chairman of the British Guild of Beer Writers and author of CAMRA's 101 Beer Days Out (shopl.camra.org.uk)

Write to *BEER*, CAMRA HQ, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW or email wb.editor@camra.org.uk

I found the Stout of Africa article

(BEER, summer) a very interesting read. I have drunk FES and West Indies porter on many occasions while on trips to the Caribbean and enjoyed it greatly, so it was fascinating to read the history of it.

Interestingly, chatting to the locals, the vast majority of them find it too potent at 7.5 per cent ABV and tend to avoid it unless they want to suffer from a hangover or just drink the one bottle or two at the most.

On my last trip a few years ago to St Lucia, I could only find bottles of Foreign Extra (pictured), which comes in at 6.5 per cent and is possibly a bit more palatable to the local beer drinkers.

I was up until then unaware of this version and was surprised it didn't get a mention in the article. Stuart Roberts, Chester

I enjoyed Carry out Camping by

Martin Ellis (BEER, summer). This reminded me of the first camping trip in our Romahome. The Reedham Ferry Inn in the Norfolk Broads not only has its own campsite, but also operates a chain ferry and is a short walk along the River Yare to Reedham with yet more pubs!

As a campervan owner I found

Martin Ellis's feature (BEER, summer) helpful. It would have been even better if he'd said whether they were accessible. I love real ale, but if you can't use the toilet it spoils the occasion. If pubs had no toilets there



A more palatable option for St Lucia drinkers?

would be riots, but somehow it's acceptable if you're a wheelchair user.

Thankfully, last year I was able to enjoy drinking beer and camping at the very same New Inn, as it was accessible. For those who are interested, another accessible one with camping available is the great Yorkshire Hussar in Markington.

I'm sure I'm not the only disabled beer drinker, so come on BEER, and please ask your contributors to also say whether the places they review are accessible.

Caron Walker, Newcastle

Editor replies: You raise a very good point regarding access to pubs.

What a pity the commemorative

edition of your excellent magazine (BEER, spring) celebrating 50 years of CAMRA wasn't the 50th rather than the 51st issue. I have kept them all. I won't be around to celebrate 100 years of CAMRA, but with four issues a year, I hope to be still here for the 100th issue of BEER in 2033.

Malcolm Watson, Isle of Wight

Back to basics is what's needed

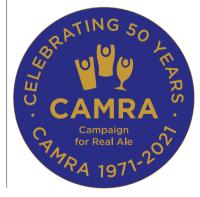
as things return to normal after a dreadful year, and Susan Nowak's feature on Proper Food (*BEER*, summer) couldn't have come at a better time.

Paul Mudge, Stafford

Reading Susan Nowak's near

superhuman support of her local watering holes post-lockdown left me open-mouthed in admiration. Learning how she and her husband had managed to visit what seemed like every pub in the South West enjoying pint after pint, I wasn't surprised she thought the Devon town of Totnes was in Cornwall.

Neil Jeffery, Falmouth, Cornwall



Heritage pubs with a twist

Last year, CAMRA published *Real Heritage Pubs of the South East*, the final volume in a series of regional guides. Here, in the second of two articles, **Paul Ainsworth** looks at more highlights from the book

PHOTOS: MICHAEL SLAUGHTER LRPS

Our first visit to the South East

focused on pubs that were both on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors and, by and large, conformed to the traditional notion of a classic, time-honoured pub. This time we'll look at some interiors that are at the quirkier or more unusual end of our definition of a heritage pub.

We begin in Buckinghamshire at the **Royal Standard of England** in Forty Green. This claims to be the oldest free house in England, but supporting evidence is sketchy to say the least.

Our interest, though, lies in the plentiful nooks and crannies, the exposed timber work and, most of all, the spectacular old settle bulging out onto the entrance corridor and forming one side of a quarry-tiled room. A number of changes back in 1963 included installation of quality fittings like two of the bar counters.

Moving west to Oxfordshire is another pub with Civil War connections, the **Olde Reine Deer Inn**, Banbury. The main attraction for us is the Globe Room of 1637, richly fitted out with superb panelling, stone fireplace, ornate doors and fine moulded ceiling.

The panelling was sold off in 1912, but returned home to its rightful place in 1965. The front part of the pub, though opened up, also has bags of character.

Also in Oxfordshire, but in the south rather than the north of the county, is Checkendon, home to 'the pub in the woods', the **Black Horse**. In the same





Top: Royal Standard of England **Above:** Olde Reine Deer Inn **Below:** Jolly Taxpayer



family since 1905, the pub has three small rooms, though two have been largely amalgamated.

The time-warp service features an old wooden pull-out drawer for a till and bills calculated by pen and paper. Beer is fetched from the cellar. Until the 1980s, a combined pub and dairy business operated here – such doubling-up was once common at rural pubs.

Hampshire's our next port of call, specifically Portsmouth, and the wonderfully named **Jolly Taxpayer**. An excellent community local, it was built in 1928 in a whimsical sub-arts and crafts style. Two of the five rooms survive intact (the public was once three rooms, hence the three outside doors), but a true rarity is the still-functioning off-licence. Elsewhere, it has original panelling, counters, bar backs and fireplaces.

Staying in Hants, we visit the

county's other big city, Southampton, and the **Red Lion**. There are two main items of interest here: the layout mostly predates World War II and it also sits inside a late-medieval hall house. The latter is immensely tall and reveals its old timber framing and many other features. The servery lies beneath the medieval private upper chamber. All hugely atmospheric.

Along the coast we go, into West Sussex and the buffet at **Horsted Keynes Station** on the preserved Bluebell line. The station aims to take us back to the 1930s and the simple,











Clockwise from top: Resplendent wall tiling at the General Havelock; guide cover shot King & Queen - one of eight Brighton entries; Horsted Keynes Station buffet on the Bluebell line; Red Lion sits inside hall house; time-warp Black Horse, Checkendon

small buffet is a perfect example of the type that existed in dozens of stations all over the country. Contact the Bluebell Railway to check opening times.

East Sussex next where Brighton has no less than eight entries in the book whose cover photo is of our next pub, the amazing King & Queen. Rebuilt in 1931, this is an early example of the theme pub, as the interior is decked out Tudor England style. You enter a mighty Tudor hall, complete with minstrels gallery, stained glass, curving staircase far too much to describe in full in a short article like this. Changes in 1967 included the loss of the bar back and

'The interior is Tudor style. You enter a mighty hall with minstrels' gallery, stained glass and curving staircase'

a partition that once split the main part into two rooms.

We end our journey along the coast in Hastings, home to a further five entries, including the General Havelock. Much of the interior is of no heritage interest, but the pictorial wall tiling is perhaps the most resplendent in England.

Lining a former corridor are scenes depicting the castle, the Battle of Hastings and a sea engagement where a French pirate ship is seen off in no uncertain terms. The general himself sits proudly on his horse in a tiled picture inside the back entrance - he was a hero of the Indian Mutiny.

These two articles have featured 16 of the pubs in the book, but there are another 98 all worthy of your attention and which, thank goodness, you're now able to visit and enjoy.

Real Heritage Pubs of the South East is available from the CAMRA shop at the members' price of £5.99

Turning clock back

Volunteers are restoring Gilbert White's brewhouse and trialling centuries-old recipes, writes Mark Lovatt

"I'm just going out for

beer, I may be some time..."

These oft-adapted last words of Captain Oates seem a fitting introduction to three modern-day beer heroes who brought an 18th-century brewhouse back into production as Gilbert White's brewery, just in time to keep the village of Selborne in Hampshire supplied during the first lockdown of 2020.

When the Covid-19 pandemic forced the Selborne Arms to close its doors last

March, villagers had nowhere to buy beer, as the village post office and stores had already closed the year before. The shop at Gilbert White's House and Gardens museum became the place to go for locally brewed real ale.

The museum, which opened in 1955, also houses the Oates collections, dedicated to two remarkable explorers of the natural world, Lawrence Oates and his equally intrepid uncle, Frank.

The brewhouse was built in 1765 by the Reverend Gilbert White and, miraculously, the original brewing copper and fireplace survive, although modern nanobrewery technology is now employed to produce a fine range of ales.

Gilbert White, a forerunner of and inspiration for Charles Darwin, was a renowned naturalist whose records of animal and plant life through the seasons are used by researchers to this day. He also experimented with brewing and kept detailed notes of his recipes and methods.



Above: From left, Gren Earney, John Elder and Andy Murphy

"During the refurbishment of the house around Christmas 2019, our collections manager, Kim James, found Gilbert White's original brewing log, with 30 years' worth of records. It's just amazing to look back two-and-a-half centuries and see what sort of thing he was doing right here in this brewhouse," said volunteer brewer and retired headteacher Gren Earney. It seems he was as meticulous at documenting his brews as he was of recording the arrival and disappearance of his favourite bird, the swift, in his garden.

Fellow brewer and retired geophysicist John Elder added: "The first thing we looked for was one of Reverend White's recipes we could try in the modern brewery and compare notes on the ale."

'It seems he was as meticulous at documenting his brews as he was of recording the arrival of his favourite bird, the swift'

The result is Gilbert's 1765 (4.6 per cent ABV), described as having a subtle smokiness.

The third member of the triumvirate, Andy Murphy, who describes himself as a retired arms dealer in a tongue-in-cheek reference to a career at BAE Systems, said: "Some of the ingredients may have changed over the years, but we are still using essentially similar brewing methods and aiming to use local hops where possible, just as Gilbert White did,

according to his records."

The three volunteers are responsible for the entire process, which takes place in the fairly confined space Gilbert White allowed for the purpose. They were also involved in obtaining grants from the EU and the South Downs National Park among others, and donations were gratefully accepted via the founder member scheme.

The brewery supplied five casks of ale to the Selborne Arms ahead of the much-anticipated indoor reopening in May, following the popularity of the very local product with villagers and visitors alike. During pubs reopening for outdoor sales earlier in the year, a brewhouse cask sold out in only four days.

Two brews are named after

footpaths up the scarp slope from the village to the top of Selborne Hanger, cut by Gilbert White and his brother. The Zig Zag path takes the more direct











Clockwise from top: Gilbert White's house; nanobrewery equipment; original copper survives; diminutive brewhouse

route, reflected in the strength of the ale that bears its name, ZigZag Ale (6.3 per cent). The Bostal path makes for a gentler ascent to the top but, like the eponymous session ale, New Bostal (4.3 per cent), it may take slightly longer, but gets you to the same place in the end.

The museum is the largest employer in this mainly rural area and very much part of the community. Regular museum events bring visitors from near and far, and many involve sampling the brewery's output during monthly tasting days, where flights of four beers can be tried, with tasting notes available. Wedding couples can sample the beers and choose which they would like to be served at their on-site wedding - and even help to brew it.

Friday night eat-in or takeaway food - a collaboration between White's Café and the Selborne Arms - was popular during lockdown and is attracting even more interest as the restrictions are

gradually eased. October should see the return of the ZigZag Festival, with 20 local ales and three ciders plus entertainment, involving the brewery, pub and village hall.

A full range of the brewery's ales may be purchased in bottles or growlers from the shop with all profits ploughed back into the museum's coffers. Bottles are reused and a 20p deposit is charged to promote returns, although most customers don't need any encouragement to come back for more.

The brewery is aiming to recruit an

apprentice brewer to pass on the trio's skills to the next generation and is also planning on setting up a series of introductory courses for those with a personal or professional interest.

The brewery regularly produces seven beers: four British and three based on international styles – a hoppy American IPA, craft lager and, perhaps inevitably,

a weissbier (white beer). Seasonal ales include a Christmas special, Danishrecipe porter and chocolate stout.

But, of course, the collection would not be complete without paying respect to the Arctic explorer and self-sacrificing member of Scott's expedition who will now be remembered not only by his famous last words, but also by an India Pale Ale that bears his name.

Like the man himself, Capt Lawrence Oates IPA (4.7 per cent) is described as complex and balanced, and is perhaps best served at room temperature...

Find out more at gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk



Mark Lovatt is an IT specialist with a book on solution architecture due out in August (shop.bcs.org). He is scriptwriter for the CAMRA podcast Pubs. Pints. People.

Find him on Twitter at @mmlovatt

Should table service continue in the UK?

Go to a pub in most parts of the world and beer is ordered from staff and served at your table. Since the various lockdowns, many people have got used to table service here. Should the practice stay once pubs and clubs fully reopen?

What a venue wants to do is ultimately up to them and dictated by their circumstances. Micropubs have shown that table service can be done effectively in certain venues and is popular. But personally, I look forward to the return of service at the bar taking the time to inspect the pump clips, chatting to staff about what they might recommend, maybe even striking up conversation with a regular about what they are drinking.

I also dislike some aspects of table service here in the UK - especially if you have to flag down an already overworked member of staff. And returning a pint, either to be topped up or changed if it's not right, is a faff I can do without.

Ash Corbett-Collins

Definitely not for me, I want to view what I am buying; some beers have unusual names, so it's difficult to know the style. I once ordered a pint (now well known) on the strength of the name, took one sip and ditched it, not to my taste. Also, after a recent pub visit, after the usual entry stuff, "take a seat and we will come for your order", after 10 minutes' wait, I asked the door person who is coming to take my order? "Oh, I'd forgotten about you, what would you like?" "What real ales have you got?" "Err, umm..."

Enough said I feel!

Graham Larn



I've no objection to table service being retained as an option if some venues choose to do that. After all, Wetherspoon has been offering it through its app for years.

But for me, being served at a table completely detracts from a key aspect of the pub experience. I'll be spending an evening leaning on a bar once again as soon as that's permitted.

Ben Wilkinson

I've lived in Germany where table service is the norm (though bar service exists and is usual in the smaller establishments) and it works OK there. But there isn't the variety of outlets (apart from specialist bars), so what vou can order tends to be much the same anywhere in the same area. You do have to have more time! The 'quick pint' hardly exists. Expect to wait 10 minutes. That's not the British way with ale!

Julian Townsend

In your opening post you highlight how it is the continental way and yes, there is a place for it in Britain, particularly in food-led establishments.

However, the British pub is about a trip to the bar or sitting there on a stool. It is about the social interaction with other customers on that trip and when standing at the bar. So, for me, the traditional pub is here to stay as well.

David Maidstone

Most bars abroad will offer both and I can see times I would appreciate that. When with friends at a table, having drinks delivered can be helpful and quicker. However, being able to stand or sit at a bar is key to my enjoyment. I could see both being employed and having their place, but it should be down to the establishment and the drinker as to which they offer or use.

Ben Brown



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Harviestoun ② Bleak House
 Esther Summerson ③ Adlai
 Stevenson ④ Don't Start Now Dua Lipa ⑤ Sarah Siddons
 Vincent van Godh ⑦ An

ancient Carthaginian and Roman city in Libya
3 Hanlons brewery 9 Geoffrey Palmer 10 Fear
of changes 10 Poachers brewery 11 Warsaw Pact
13 Steve McQueen for Hunger 12 A songbird
found in America and Canada, related to the
blackbird 13 All won the BBC Sports Personality
of the Year 10 John Wycliffe 10 The only female
racing driver to score a point in Formula 1 after
finishing sixth in 1975 10 An internationally
recognised system for the classification of
colours 10 Canis Major 10 George Sanders

Summer winners: Rob Gauld, Maidenhead; John Mackie, Oxford; Peter Reynolds, Gloucester; Stephen Walton, Halifax; Keith Woolston, Reading

0	What	is	ranidaphobia?
---	------	----	---------------

A:

2 Who painted The Girl with the Pearl Earring?

A

Which Republican senator went on holiday after a storm hit his home state leaving thousands with no heat or power?

A:

What's the connection between Madeline Bray, Arthur Gride and Newman Noggs?

A:

5 Which brew was Champion Beer of Britain in 2006?

A:

(3) Who said: "Goodbye, kid. Hurry back"?

A:

What name did the Romans give to Artemis, the Greek god of hunting?

A:

Which Cornish brewery produces Tamar and Litehouse?

A:

What is the oldest British order of chivalry?

A:

Katz's Deli in Manhattan was made famous by a notoriously fake scene in which film?

A:

1 Name the three forms of adult teeth.

A:

Whose first novel for adults was Mad Blood Stirring?

A:

Which song has the lines "Romantic Piscean seeks angel in disguise / Chinese-speaking girlfriend, big brown eyes"?

A:

Which West Midlands brewery produces Chain Reaction Pale Ale and No Brakes IPA?

A:

(5) With which religion would you associate Guru ka Langar?

A:

(b) Who played Peter in the TV sitcom *The Piglet Files?*

A:

What is the name of the sleep stage when dreaming occurs?

A:

What sort of creature is a quarl?

A:

Which king in a pack of cards does not have a moustache?

Δ.

What colour is a porraceous object?

A:

Canny cans

The North East of England offers choices for discerning drinkers

My quest to support

independent bottle shops foregrounding local producers has led me to the North East, to Port Bierhaus in Sunderland. Choices for discerning drinkers were once painfully limited around here, but the wider region now boasts a multitude of independents, including contemporary heavy hitters like Anarchy, Almasty and Wylam, not forgetting leading brewing educators Brewlab.

And it's surely a sign of how specialist beer has shifted its market position that Port, opened in 2019, is an outgrowth of

is an outgrowth of street clothing store Port Independent.



helped me choose a varied range from breweries new to both me and to this column. The one with the most local connections was North Pier Pale

(4.2 per cent ABV,

bottle-conditioned), first made by genuine Mackem Josh Atkinson right by that landmark, though currently cuckoo-brewed at the South Causey Inn, where he also produces a beer inspired by local delicacy pink slice. Despite its modest gravity, this modern pale was one of the highlights, with lots of fruit, including apricot jam and lychee on the aroma and white grape over fine malt, with tingly citric bitterness on the finish. "Fresh, clean and perfect for a summer barbecue," says Gerard.

McColl's, founded

in 2016 just outside Bishop Auckland, offers exotic delights like rhubarb hefeweizen. But founders Danny and Gemma McColl,

like me, are Belgian fans, as demonstrated with **Petite** (4.1 per cent, unfiltered can).

This blonde ale makes good use of its Belgian yeast, with estery pear, suggestions of strawberry and cherry on a juicy palate, and a hint of spice. There's a New World piney hop note – Chinook is used as well as Celeia – and lemon pepper on the finish.

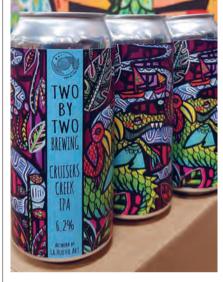
John Chester is a braille

expert as a well as a brewer, thus the name of Hops &

Dots, originally in Middlesbrough and now sharing space with another local brewer in Bishop Auckland.

Coffee Switch





Dazzling can designs are by local artist La Huevo

(6.5 per cent, unfiltered can) is one of a series working with local roasters to dose a strongish milk stout. Coffee can easily dominate, but it's well placed here alongside chocolate cake, rounded roast and hints of green pepper in a lusciously textured glassful with a crisp and ashy-dry finish. Gerard stocked it as a trial, but it flew off the shelves.

A contemporary beer

selection wouldn't be complete without a hazy and juicy IPA, and Two by Two **Cruisers Creek IPA** (6.2 per cent, unfiltered can) was Gerard's top choice, with mango and

pineapple perfume wafting over a soupy pale gold liquid with a huge yellowish head.
Suggestions of star fruit and lychee mix with bitterness on the palate, and there are rose petals on a

lingering finish. The brewery, founded in 2014 in Wallsend, boasts dazzling can designs by local artist La Huevo.

Finally, S43's Rorschach

Baltic Porter (8.1 per cent) is from a brewery in Coxhoe, County Durham, founded in 2012 and originally a cask specialist. Made with a complex speciality malt bill, Columbus hops and a German lager yeast, it doesn't quite achieve the dangerously light touch of the leading examples, but is still a worthy pour, with rye bread and black treacle, hints of caramel and liquorice, and a chewy, lightly roast finish.

Given the historic trading

links between the region and the Baltic coast, it seemed a particularly appropriate way to finish a diverting tasting.

Visit portbierhaus.com or call 0191 477 8840.

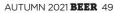
torschach



PIER

ORTH PIER PALE

Des de Moor is one of the country's leading writers on bottled beer, and author of *The CAMRA Guide to London's Best Beer, Pubs & Bars.* Follow Des at @desdemoor and read more of his reviews at desdemoor.co.uk



Pump up the volume

Kye Gibbon got hooked on craft beer while touring with dance duo Gorgon City. It's an obsession that's led him to brew his own IPA

The lockdowns of the past 14 months have been

tough for many people cooped up inside. Admittedly, there have been times during the pandemic when my wife hasn't been too happy with me. This has nothing to do with my personal qualities, but rather my new hobby of home brewing.

Our kitchen floor has frequently ended up as a sticky mess thanks to water spraying everywhere from my home-brewing immersion cooler. Meanwhile, our coats smell like fermented alcohol due to me keeping fermenters inside our clothes closet.

When the first lockdown hit in spring 2020, I bought an Anvil Foundry all-in-one home-brewing kit for our Chicago home (I moved from the UK two years ago). My first experiments didn't go well. I once miscalculated how much sugar to put into the batch and ended up over-carbonating. The beer turned into a foam bomb, just like indoor fireworks. I gave some bottles to a friend as a joke. Whenever he opened one, beer exploded everywhere!

My home brewing improved after I found an online recipe for a Son of Juice hazy IPA by Maplewood brewery. This gave me a rough guide for how many hops, grains and oats I should be using. I've since produced two New England IPAs with Manchester-based brewery ShinDigger – Another Realm and Olympia [launched to coincide with Gorgon City's new album, Olympia].

I first got into craft beer around five years ago, inspired by a brewery tour of Rebellion in Buckinghamshire. When touring the US afterwards, we got into West Coast IPAs and soon became obsessed with New England IPAs.

Whenever Gorgon City performs, we have a backstage rider, which requests a 'six-pack from the best local microbrewery'. This has led us to sample some unusual international brews. Russian beers in Moscow or Argentinian ales in Buenos Aires. It's also led to the occasional adventure. One night after supping Colombian craft beer in Bogotá, my bandmate

"Our kitchen has ended up as a sticky mess thanks to water spraying from my cooler"



Kye Gibbon (above right) with Gorgon City band partner Matt Robson-Scott Matt and I decided to attend a party using an address texted to our phones. After an hour-long ride, our taxi dropped us off in the middle of nowhere. It was a scary-looking area, full of guards with guns. We eventually plucked up enough courage to speak to one gun-brandishing man, who started laughing. Somehow, we made it home.

The odd kitchen-wrecking aside, home brewing is much safer. In fact, there are parallels between making beer and dance music. There's a lot of science, maths and calculations involved with both. You can also experiment, which leads to the most fun results.

I'm really proud of Olympia. It's got fruity,

tropical hops in it, such as Mosaic and Sabro, which has a coconut, creamy texture. The taste of Olympia is a tropical explosion, almost like a pina colada. It's the perfect summer beer for festivals or sitting in the park.

I'm also hoping Olympia will introduce more dance music fans to craft beers. Whenever we play raves, we see the audience drinking Corona or Becks. Often, people become dance music fans by going on holiday to Ibiza. The next thing they know they're listening to techno at 6am. It's the same with craft beer. It challenges palates and you're soon digging out saisons and dark beers. Just like dance music, once you get into craft beer, there's no going back...

• Gorgon City's Olympia beer and album are out now.





Learn & Discover LGBTQ+ pubs series First virtual bottled beer champion It's now or never for pubs post-Covid New book charts UK beer culture's rise

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WHAT'S BREWING

AUTUMN 2021

CAMPAIGNS, NEWS AND VIEWS



Celebrate cask

Industry urged to support pubs and brewers

CAMRA is backing a brewing industry initiative promoting cask ale. Industry bodies are making a clarion call to pubs, bars, pubcos and breweries for this year's Cask Ale Week (23 Sept-3 Oct) to be part of their comeback strategy.

"It's not enough for pubs to be the hot topic now as they reopen their doors," said Cask Marque's Paul Nunny. "To survive, they – and breweries – need to stay right at the centre of the national conversation, and right at the heart of their communities. Cask Ale Week has an important role to play in this.

"Cask Ale Week is something round which pubs, bars, pubcos and breweries can rally. They can do their own thing but doing it under one banner will give cut-through that's unachievable by working alone," said Nunny.

He said that even before the lockdowns, retailers were desperately trying to encourage shoppers to mimic the pub experience at home with "big night in" type deals.

"In many ways, the pandemic appeared to play into their hands. But the reality is, there's a big difference between socialising in private and public space. Simply put, you can't buy pub atmosphere in a supermarket, nor get it delivered to your door. Ditto for fresh cask beer."

CAMRA chief executive Tom Stainer said: "CAMRA has long been a supporter of Cask Ale Week, and after an incredibly difficult year for the industry, we're looking forward to joining forces to support UK pubs and breweries."

The British Beer & Pub Association, UKHospitality and the Society of Independent Brewers are also supporting the activity.

MPs back CAMRA's duty cut

A REPORT commissioned by a cross-party group of MPs has recommended a new draught beer duty rate to boost footfall in pubs.

The main finding of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group's (APPBG) Caskenomics report into cask beer and the Covid crisis said government should cut duty on draught beer in pubs and clubs.

CAMRA national chairman Nik Antona said: "This would help support pub-going, encourage responsible drinking, save jobs and keep pubs and breweries alive."

APPBG chair Mike Wood said: "Brexit provides an opportunity for the chancellor to lower duty rates on draught beers – it's an opportunity we would urge him to consider."



APPBG chair Mike Wood

More behind the scenes insights

10 recollections from past 50 years released

CAMRA is releasing 10 more "behind the scenes" stories from key moments in its history, as the organisation continues celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2021.

This is the second release in a series of first-hand accounts from CAMRA campaigns, told by the people leading at the time. The testimonials look back on some of CAMRA's earliest victories, go behind the scenes of key moments in the Campaign's evolution, and cover right up to the present day — including moments such as campaigning for the Tied Pubs (Scotland) Bill, which became law just last month, and insight from industry stalwarts such as beer writer Roger Protz.

CAMRA national

chairman Nik Antona said: "Over 50 years of campaigning, CAMRA has made its mark in the industry and in the halls of Westminster, from campaigning for licensing reforms, to establishing the National Pub of the Year competition and helping to form the European Beer Consumers Union. It has been fascinating reading the recollections of these campaigners and the

journeys they undertook with CAMRA to effect positive change, and I hope other readers enjoy learning about them too.

"We are finally seeing the light after a year of lockdowns and restrictions. While looking back, we reaffirm our commitment to fighting for pubs and consumers now and in the future, and supporting the industry through the next few months."

CAMRA's LGBTQ+ pubs series

CAMRA's Learn & Discover platform is marking Pride Month with a new threepart audio series exploring the centrality of pubs to LGBTQ+ lives.

The audio series *Passion*, *Pride & Protest* has been curated and hosted by award-winning writer and

audio maker Emma Inch (pictured). Emma speaks to key figures, including LGBTQ+ historians, activists and publicans, to tell their stories.

From the first gay pubs that sprang up at a time when homosexuality was still illegal, through to the era of HIV/AIDS, Section 28, the growth of Pride, right up to the modern day, with the struggles many of the community's venues are currently going through to survive, this series will explore the role the pub has played for LGBTQ+ communities over the years.



Presenter Emma Inch



Strong Suffolk survives

GREENE King has axed and then rapidly reinstated its heritage beer Strong Suffolk Ale. The demise was signalled by the brewery's quality control manager Susan Chisholm in the Brewery History Society's newsletter when she said the last batch had been packaged.

Emails to Greene King seeking clarification included one from CAMRA national director Nick Boley, who is also the brewery liaison officer for the Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk brewery.

Within hours, head brewer Ross O'Hara said Greene King was not deleting Strong Suffolk and "remains part of our plans as a rotational product".

He said sales had been hit by the pandemic as most came from the brewery shop, which had been shut.

The beer is a blend of Old 5X (12 per cent) and BPA or Best Pale Ale (5 per cent) with a final strength of 6 per cent.



Virtual first for bottle champ

 A over T scoops our top bottled beer crown

HOGS Back's A over T has been crowned the Campaign's Champion Bottled Beer of Britain.

The award, which recognises the best bottle-conditioned beer in the country, was run virtually for the first time.

The Tongham brewery's
A over T is a rich, complex,
9 per cent barley wine, that
is brewed in small batches.
It is made from English
malted barley, Kent
Goldings hops are added for

bitterness and aroma and Bramling Cross to enhance the character, resulting in deep, rich and complex flavours of sultanas, orange peel and plums.

CAMRA's national director responsible for the competition Gary Timmins said: "This is the first time CAMRA has conducted any judging virtually. Although the judges missed the personal contact, they were delighted with the quality of the beer. All beers tasted blind and we can definitely say A over T won fairly and squarely."

Hogs Back owner Rupert Thompson (above) said the beer should be enjoyed as a fortified wine.

Thompson said: "We're delighted A over T, our cask in a bottle, is CAMRA's Champion Bottled Beer this year. A over T's loyal drinkers, including our friends from the local CAMRA branch, are always keen to try the newest vintage."

Durham's Temptation (10 per cent) took home silver and Harvey's Imperial Extra Double Stout (9 per cent) bronze.

Mad Wolf's howling success

WOLF brewery's Mad Wolf has been crowned Norfolk's top cask ale.

Judges of the award organised by the Norfolk Tasting Panel, described the 4.7 per cent beer as having a "well-rounded malty foundation with chocolate and chestnut support". According to the panel it has a bittersweet hoppiness providing depth and balance.

"Full bodied and lasting, the brew emerged as winner after a difficult year of judging by the Norfolk panel," said judges chair Alan Edwards.

Second went to Mr Winter's Fusioneer, a dark, 3.6 per cent mild. Third was Lignum Vitae, a 6.5 per cent strong ale from Grain brewery.

It's now or never for pubs post pandemic

Campaigner of the Year 2020 **Mark Haslam** says we must act now to ensure pubs survive the ravages of Covid-19 and ruthless property developers

IT was the dour Scots actor John Laurie as Private Frazer in Dad's Army who exhorted: "We're doomed, we're all doomed!" Of course, in the 80 episodes of the sitcom, his pessimism never did prove to be founded. And one suspects the same will ultimately be said about the much predicted demise of the British pub long after Covid has been relegated from the headlines, but we can't afford to take this as read.

There are already people and organisations seeking to create a narrative that hundreds of pubs are doomed to close for good following the pandemic. So, what should we CAMRA members do about it?

Firstly, we need to question the default assumption that "Covid means permanent pub closures". To underline this we must resist repeating the mantra "Covid means it's inevitable a pub will



close". That is, unless we want to help that become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Those who only see pubs as development opportunities, will see Covid as a golden opportunity. They will doubtless be replacing their cliches of drinking and driving and the smoking ban with Covid to justify the conversion or demolition of a pub.

Now more than ever, in the 50 years of CAMRA's existence, we must face up to this threat.

It is a sad, but an inevitable fact, that a number of pub businesses will have ceased trading during the pandemic. However, this does not automatically mean a pub is destined to be closed permanently. Many of the licensees who have left their pubs will have been operators of well-run businesses – some of whom are good friends of CAMRA.

However, all is not lost as there are still plenty of potential operators looking





KEEP UP TO DATE

'Years of work by CAMRA means pubs now enjoy a high degree of protection in planning terms. We need to remind planners of these'

to take on pubs. Don't take my word for it. John Williams of pub-selling agent Sidney Phillips, said this year: "We have been bowled over by the number of [pub purchase] enquiries since the first lockdown in March 2020."

It is vital we ensure these potential owners are given the chance to buy that closed pub, especially as planners may not know about this trend.

So, how do we make this happen? It doesn't take a lot of effort to make a big difference. Thankfully, to convert a pub into something else (or to demolish it) requires planning permission. But,

before your eyes glaze over on reading planning, it is important to realise you just need to ask a few straightforward questions of planners when a pub is facing a hostile application. Years of hard work by CAMRA means pubs now enjoy a high degree of protection in planning terms. What we need to do is remind planners of this.

It is vital to understand that even if a local is closed and has no licence, it's still a pub in planning terms. And to get the necessary permission, a case needs to be made as to why it isn't viable and not needed.

Significantly, there is an expectation in the planning



Left: Cliffe Arms, Mathon, Herefordshire faces being turned in homes. **Above:** Campaigner of the Year Mark Haslam

regulations that efforts should be made by a pub-owner to sell the property as a pub business first before consideration is given to an alternative use.

This means a pub needs to have been advertised on the licensed property market for a reasonable period of time at a price commensurate with its value as a pub business (to offer the pub for lease or rent does not count for this).

If you only ask the planners one question it should be: "Has the pub been marketed for sale, and at a realistic price? If it hasn't, how can it be proven it's no longer viable?"

It can seem intimidating getting involved in planning, but it doesn't need to be. If you're in a CAMRA branch that has not been in a position to contest hostile planning applications appertaining to pubs, now really is the time to step up.

It doesn't need to involve hours of work – if nothing else, just ask the planners that one simple question. But, it's even better if you can get a few of the locals to ask the same question.

If you feel compelled to make other arguments to the planners the good news is help is there at camra. org.uk/saveyourlocal

If you still want some support, contact the CAMRA Campaigns Team on campaigns@camra.org. uk – it can link you up with experienced volunteers.

We understand the value of pubs to communities, and often boast an encyclopaedic knowledge of those in our area. Do not underestimate its value.

These are advantages developers and their like will never have. If we choose not to share this knowledge with the planners by objecting to an unwanted planning application, then we're in danger of seeing pubs close that don't need to.

With pubs facing their biggest threat in living memory, and in our 50th year, it's now time for all of us to stand up for pubs.
Unlike Private Frazer, let's not swallow the line we're all doomed!

LOCALS' KEY ROLE DURING LOCKDOWN

• PUBS were key providers of services to their communities during the first lockdown. The social value of community pubs during the first Covid-19 lockdown is revealed in a report from Pub is The Hub. It found for every £1 invested in a pub project up to £9.24 of additional social value was created (see right).

NI BREWERS TO GET TAPROOMS

 THE Campaign has welcomed moves by members of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLA) to allow alcoholic drinks producers to obtain a liquor licence for the first time after years of campaigning by CAMRA. The move means breweries and cider producers look set to be able to sell their products directly to the public online, at some markets and events, and from their own shop.

BRANCH CHANGES FESTIVAL FOCUS

 SUNDERLAND branch is exploring supporting pub-based beer festivals rather than run its own event this year. The branch felt it was more important to support pubs as they reopen and encourage people to return rather than being accused of taking business from them with a beer festival. It is now looking at the feasibility of supporting or arranging events at pubs. Durham branch has taken a similar decision

BREWERS BREW IPA FOR INDIA

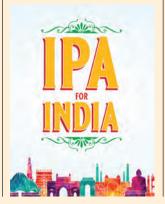
• BREWERS have got together to raise money to buy medical supplies for communities in India hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.
The project (below) saw 15 brewers each brewing a classic IPA and sending all profits to SEWA UK.

LATEST UPDATE ON LIFE MEMBERSHIP

 FOLLOWING legal advice, the National Executive has reversed its decision to remove Life Membership and replace it with a 10-year version. CAMRA's legal advisor confirmed the organisation's Articles mean changes to types of memberships should be decided by CAMRA's Conference. The National Executive is to discuss putting a motion to members in 2022. Existing life members will not be affected by any decision at Conference.

NEW USE FOR SPENT GRAINS

• US scientists have found a new way to treat brewer's spent grain and use it to create sources of protein. The researchers





Fox and Hounds in Herts opened a shop during lockdown

presented their results at the spring meeting of the American Chemical Society (ACS). While cows and other animals may be able to digest spent grain, it is difficult for humans due to the high fibre content. To transform it into something more functional a wet-milling process to separate the protein from the fibre has been developed. Researchers have now started to explore using the protein as an ingredient in food.

WASTE BEER POWERS HOMES

• FOR many of us, one of the worst aspects of the lockdown for brewers, pubs and clubs was the sight of good beer being poured down the drain. But Hall and Woodhouse brewery found a way to turn the situation around. The brewery, based in Blandford Forum, Dorset, used its unsold beer to

generate power for homes. The brewery's energy system can generate enough power to supply 46 homes per year and 17,000 for a day. The firm managed to use the returned beer and convert it into green electricity by using the biogas it creates.

YOUNG'S TENANTED PUBS GO ON SALE

• PUB group Young & Co has planted for sale signs outside its tenanted pubs, many in prime London locations. In a statement to the London Stock Exchange the company said: "Young's notes the recent media speculation regarding a possible sale of its tenanted estate. The company confirms Savills has been appointed and it is in discussions regarding a possible sale."

YOUR NEWS

If you have news for this page email editor@camra.org.uk







Beer's British culture club

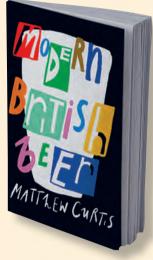
British brewers have carved out a worldleading beer scene and the latest CAMRA book charts its origins and progress

THE British beer scene has changed dramatically over the last 20 years and its story is celebrated in a new CAMRA book, Modern British Beer, written by award-winning writer and photographer Matthew Curtis, maps its evolution through the stories of individual regional brews over the last two decades.

The title looks at how the British scene has taken its cue from the US craft beer revolution and the resurrection of traditional styles in Europe, as well as some home-grown traditions.

According to the author, the brewers of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have carved out a unique and exciting world-leading beer culture.

Curtis provides a personal insight into this eclectic and innovative world, using 86 influential brews - from how



they taste, how their ingredients are sourced, to the engaging stories of the people behind the scenes working hard to bring exciting beer to drinkers all over Britain.

He takes a regional dive into who the movers and shakers are in the eclectic world of beer and brewing

Matthew Curtis is

an award-winning British beer writer and photographer. He is the founder and editor of Pellicle magazine, and can be found contributing to publications such as Ferment and BEER. Find him on both Twitter and Instagram at @totalcurtis

across Britain. Modern British Beer will help readers source, discover and fine tune their appreciation of beer.

BEERMOTH

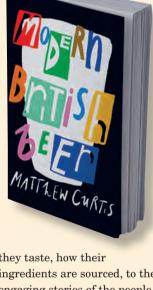
Curtis said: "I am very excited to be sharing *Modern* British Beer and celebrating just some of the industry's success in the 21st century. The book is a fantastic starting point to explore British beer with an exciting location closer than you think. It is about why modern British beer is important. Whether it's a can or two at home, a bottle generously shared with friends, a quick pint at the local, or a night of revelry to mark a milestone moment, British beer is really coming of age and deserves to be celebrated."

Modern British Beer is available for pre-order now at £13, or £16 for a signed edition. It will go on sale from 12 August 2021.

To find out more and pre-order your copy, visit shop1.camra.org.uk/product/ modern-british-beer

'Curtis provides a personal insight into this eclectic and innovative world, using a selection of 86 influential brews'





Left: Belfast beer flight. Top: Manchester's Northern Quarter

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