

FREE

Beer at Heart



Magazine of the Heart of Staffordshire branch of CAMRA

Incorporating Uttoxeter & District sub-branch and covering Stafford
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10th *Stafford* Beer & Cider Festival

27th-29th July

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Avast me hearties, Fest approachin'!

Also in this issue:

- **Craft beer controversy** | Page 12
- **Limestone and Slater's news** | Page 9
- **Uttoxeter's Pub of the Year** | Page 21
- **Cider Pub of the Year** | Page 11 *and much more...*



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Summer 2017

Beer at Heart

Winner of West Midlands CAMRA Branch Magazine Best Newcomer Award

Welcome

Well it's that time of year again. Time for Stafford's biggest and best beer and cider festival. Many of you will recall the first couple of festivals, everyone packed like sardines in the hot and sweaty Gatehouse Theatre. It's a bit more spacious and cool at Blessos! Some of the 'greatest hits' of the past nine festivals will be making a reappearance - more about that on page 17.

One only has to glance at the letters page in *What's Brewing* to see that 'craft beer' is a controversial subject for CAMRA. We tentatively dip a toe into the debate by finding out what some of it actually tastes like on page 12.

Uttoxeter and District's best pubs - and their newest - are celebrated on pages 21-23.

Paul Dytka gets round an impressive number of pubs in Stafford for us on page 30. I wish I had his energy - and beer legs.

Here's hoping we get lots of lovely weather this summer with many opportunities for sitting outside a pub, enjoying a perfect pint of real ale or cider with friends.

See you at our Festival, 27-29th July!

Andy Murray

editor@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

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Chair's Chat

Summer appears to have almost arrived for a few days, as I write this in the beer garden of a small village pub in north east Staffordshire. The thing I have daydreamed about through the long winter months.

It is the day after the branch Annual General Meeting and I have been fortunate enough to have been re-elected as Branch Chairman for another year. Although it has to be admitted unopposed. Most of the other committee posts have been covered, but there are still some vacancies, a couple connected with Publicity, but an important one is Young Members Officer! Are there any interested young members out there? If so get in touch via the Editor or Membership Secretary.

Preparations for the Beer Festival are continuing apace, as evidenced by various features in other parts of this issue. Volunteers are still required for all the setup and take down sessions, also during the public opening times, especially if you want to dress up as a pirate (this year's theme). All details and enrolment forms can be found on the branch website, there are also Twitter and Facebook links.

As I now require another pint and am also getting sunstroke it's the end of this bit. Hope to see a lot of you at the Beer Festival, 27th, 28th and 29th July at the usual venue, Blessed William Howard High School, off Newport Road, Stafford.

Neil Butler
Chair, Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA



Branch Diary

NB dates and venues are subject to change, so before making a special journey please check the diary on our website, which is bang up-to-date

JUNE 2017

THURSDAY 15th JUNE: NATIONAL BEER DAY - start 7pm at the Butler's Bell, Stafford, then crawl through town, ending at the Sun.

THURSDAY 23rd JUNE: PENKRIDGE TRIP - Full details will be on our website

THURSDAY 29th JUNE: BEER FESTIVAL PLANNING MEETING - the Sun, Stafford, 8pm

JULY 2017

SATURDAY 8th JULY: RAIL ALE TRAIL - Churnet Valley Railway. Booking essential via Social Secretary

THURSDAY 18th JULY: BEER FESTIVAL FINAL PLANNING MEETING - the Sun, Stafford, 8pm

SATURDAY 22nd JULY: SHREWSBURY BEER FESTIVAL TRIP - 11.01 train from Stafford, changing at Wolverhampton

27th - 29th JULY: 10th ANNUAL STAFFORD BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL - Blessed William Howard School, Stafford. BE THERE!

AUGUST 2017

Nothing planned as yet but be sure to check our online branch diary!

Pub and Club news

STAFFORD

The **Star and Garter** offers 30 pence off cask ales every Wednesday. They also sell real ciders.

The former Hogshead/Chambers reopened very briefly as the **Living Room** at the end of April. Just a week later the pub closed 'temporarily' amid allegations of staff stealing stock. Counter allegations followed from staff about the director of the company, bouncing cheques and owed wages. On 12th May all furniture and equipment was removed from the pub, along with the Living Room signs. Don't expect this to reopen again anytime soon.

No. 7 Market Square is to stop selling real ale in order to concentrate on craft beer and gin. A shame but the premises lacked the facilities to keep real ale in optimum conditions, which was a source of frustration to landlord Andy.

Applications for new premises licences have been submitted for **Redrum**, 36 Crabberly Street, Stafford (was Stafford Ale House) and **Pear Bars**, Units 1-3 Riverside, Stafford.

STONE

The **Swan** is holding a beer festival between 5th - 9th July with 40 beers from Manchester and Liverpool plus 20 ciders (see page 7).

The **Red Lion** in the High Street has had a major makeover, primarily to turn a backyard wilderness into a swish outdoor seating/smoking area. Still three or four handpulls. Nostalgia fans will be disappointed that the original Joules and cigarette woodcuts have now gone.

The **Borehole** has occasionally started selling beers from Stray Cat (see page

9). We've tried their *Milk Stout* and it was a most excellent tipples.

Ten Green Bottles have opened an outlet in Stone High Street (first one is in Newcastle). A bit too late to do a review but presumably will be a craft beer and gin emporium.

Application for premises licence: **Brewstation**, 41b, High Street, Stone

GNOSALL

In CAMRA's Staffordshire Pub of the Year competition we understand that our own candidate, **George & the Dragon**, has had favourable judging visits. Good luck!

BASWICH/WEeping CROSS

Titanic Brewery has apparently pulled their application to convert the old supermarket into a café/bar (*sob!*).

WESTON

The **Woolpack's** ACV application has been submitted to the borough council and locals are awaiting a decision.

HILDERSTONE

Locals held discussions in May with Limestone brewery about the **Roebuck**. The pub has been closed since last December; Limestone are interested in renting the pub if villagers can raise the money to buy it. We wish them well.

ANYTOWN

Anypub

Landlords—your pub news could have been here. Drop me a line with short snippets about your upcoming events, real ale promotions, beer festivals etc.

editor@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk



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Brewery news

LYMESTONE of Stone

www.lymestonebrewery.co.uk

Still busy brewing, with Wetherspoons still being supplied; the beer is *Son of Stoneman* at present.

Monthly beers for the summer are:

June - *Standing Stone*, 4.9%

July - *Lymestone Cowboy*, 4.2%

August - *Stone Brood*, 4.4%

There will hopefully be a couple of new monthly brews introduced later in the year.

Both pubs are busy, with work started on the rear beer garden at the **Borehole**. However the most important news is that Lymestone have now taken possession of the **Quiet Woman** in Leek. Some refurbishment works are required together with complete redecoration. Opening will hopefully be in a few weeks time in the summer. Leek has now become an extraordinary destination for real ales!



Sarah has now started brewing some speciality beers under the Stray Cat Brewery brand. The present brew is *Stray Cat Milk* (4.2%), a milk stout, which has sold very well. A lager will be available soon, called *Stray Cat Strut* (4.0%), hopefully for the summer. These beers are available in the pubs, other selected outlets and the brewery.

There is an Instagram page for updates: [straycatbrewery](https://www.instagram.com/straycatbrewery)

You can also sign up to the Lymestone Brewery Newsletter by submitting your e-mail address on the brewery website.

Neil Butler

SLATERS of Stafford

www.slatersales.co.uk

The mighty *Haka* followed up its Gold Medal at the SIBA regional beer awards with a Silver at the national awards in the Strong Bitters category. *Haka* will feature on Punch Taverns' Finest Cask rotation scheme from July to September.

Slater's latest seasonal brews are:

June: *Pacifica* (3.5%) – a brand new bitter, well-rounded with a marmalade aftertaste

July: *Citrus* (4.8%) – classic Pilsner-style Hallertau hop provides the base for a zesty lemon and lime twist

August: *Maravilla* (4.5%) – this popular and award-winning raspberry-tinged beer



is back. And visitors to the branch beer festival at the end of July will get a sneak preview!

New brewer Tom joined the team in April. Brewery tours last Friday of every month. Slater's are trialling keg beer with their *Pale Ale*. It will be available at Slater's bar in Wolverhampton. Cask will of course remain their core focus.

Andy Murray

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Cider Pub of the Year

Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year **Kings Arms, Stafford**

The **Kings Arms** has followed up its Autumn 2016 Pub of the Season award with an ever bigger prize. Ed introduced real cider to the Kings Arms after taking over in 2015. At the time of writing Snails Bank Orchard Dry (5.2%), Thatchers Cheddar Valley (6%), Original Somerset Cider Co.'s Clutton Cloudy Cider (6%) and Celtic Marches Nell Gwynne (flavoured with orange and cinnamon, 4%) were on - served cool, not chilled.

On behalf of all cider drinkers thank you and good luck in the regional competition! **Andy Murray**



Presentation of the award to Ed of the Kings Arms (left) by Steven Swain

My Tour of Duty

As you may know I used to be in the Army, but here is my tour of duty scoring pubs for the Regional Cider Pub of the Year Staffordshire Region. With nearly 30 branches you can see why the West Midlands competition is split into smaller regions, with these winners entered into the overall West Midlands competition.

There were five pubs in the Staffordshire competition so I had to score four as you can't score your own branch entry - ours was the **Kings Arms** - although I did for completion. Each other branch also had a volunteer score the pubs, the scores are then tabulated by the Regional Cider Coordinator and a winner elected.

The others were **Bull's Head** (Potteries), **Black Lion** (Moorlands), **Harrows** (Wolverhampton), **King's**

Ditch (Lichfield, Sutton & Tamworth).

You score the pub out of 10 on the following categories: Cider Quality; Bar Staff Cider Knowledge; State of Pub; Bar Staff "Quality"; Community Focus; CAMRA Sympathies; Overall Value.

All scores are doubled except Cider Quality and Bar Staff Cider Knowledge which are tripled giving a score out of 160. It's not as difficult as it sounds, honest.

So how did I rate them? 1st: King's Ditch; 2nd: Kings Arms; 3rd= Black Lion and Harrows; 5th: Bull's Head.

How did they place overall? Well, as we go to press it hasn't been announced, so come along to our beer festival to find out who won and where the Kings Arms finished.

Steven Swain

Artisan Wheat Beer special

Craft beer: a nebulous term but we kind of know it when we see it, whether in snazzily-designed bottles and cans or on 'key keg' from the back of the bar.

Is CAMRA risking irrelevance by ignoring it or is it a Trojan horse that could spell the end for cask ale? As a way of starting a debate in these pages, the following articles offer honest and open-minded accounts from two craft beer novices. **Let us know your views: email the Editor**

When I was asked by the Editor to help him write an article on craft beer, I selflessly threw myself into the act of drinking and sampling craft beer to see what all the fuss is about.



I'll be honest, I am maybe intimidated by the "trendiness" that surrounds the craft beer scene. It seems a bit like a youngster's game to me. Plus, even if I wanted, I can't grow a trendy beard, and there is no chance of me getting a tattoo (unless I have a midlife crisis). I stopped trying to be cool in 2003, and that suits me just fine. I have maybe come to this article with a bit of prejudice, but using my old adage of try anything once (and sometimes twice - I am a slow learner), I am going to try craft beer with open eyes and taste-buds, and give you my verdict.

Brewdog beers seem to be the "gateway" into craft beer. They are stocked in major supermarkets now, and plenty of pubs seem to have them in bottle these days. *Punk IPA* (5.6%) is probably its most famous beer, and having sampled it I can see why. Refreshing, and hoppy without it hitting you round the chops, it makes a nice, easy-drinking beer, and it is particularly moreish. *5AM Saint* (5%) is one of their

beers I have felt compelled to try: I love a cask red ale, so I had to try this American red ale to see how it compares. I wouldn't have it in preference to a cask red ale, but I loved the maltiness and slight sweetness of this beer, and it definitely merits a revisit.

One thing I have noticed about craft beers - a lot of brewers do like to add fruit into the mix. Mango, blood orange, grapefruit are some of the flavours on the market at the moment. One of the more popular fruity crafty ales, *Bloody 'Ell*, by Beavertown, is a whopping 7.2%, an IPA with a blood orange flavour. I've had the pleasure of tasting *Lucky Jack* Grapefruit edition by Lervig Brewery, 4.7% (which makes it quite tame ABV-wise); I usually avoid grapefruit like the plague, but this beer has actually won me round. *Rango Mango* (Abbeydale brewery) is another fruity beer I've managed to sample - this beer is actually a sour Berliner Weisse, and from it's name you can probably guess it has a mango flavour. Can I just say I love mango, and mango and beer just seem a great combination! Maybe beer and fruit can be a good thing?

On the craft beer forums, I see a lot of talk about DIPAs (which to me sounds like a pornographic term), which are double IPAs. Here we are talking strong, and hoppy. I had myself a can of *Hop Diggity*, by the Mother Earth Brew Co, which had a knock-your-socks-off ABV of 8.2%. I can say that it was extremely hoppy, but not in a bad way. It was served from a fridge,

which for me is a bit of a novelty as I rarely drink chilled beers these days. It had a slight fizz, and I have to say it was very refreshing. Though, if you are wanting more sophisticated conversation with your beer, may I recommend you steer away from something this strong... (as an aside, it's nice to drink something this strong which isn't Barley Wine...)

For pudding, the idea of a *Peanut Butter Milk Stout* by Tailgate (an American brewery) sounded appealing. Sniffing it reminded me of peanut brittle, and it tasted just as divine on the mouth.

As you can tell, this isn't a comprehensive list of craft beers, just what I've managed to get through on a Saturday afternoon for a bit of fun.

Something that I did enjoy when sampling the craft beers is the refreshing aspect. I have actually enjoyed drinking a chilled beer - sometimes, just sometimes, a cooled beer is a lovely, lovely thing. Also, dare I say it, I enjoyed the "fizz" of the craft beer. It was also nice to actually try something different - I am getting less adventurous with age, and have noticed with beers that I tend to stick to a style I like. It's been nice to not be constrained by my own prejudices.

Will I be drinking craft beer again? Yes, definitely. Will it replace cask for me? No. Could it be a threat to cask ale? Only time will tell, but I hope not.

Kelly Porter



I recently received a birthday card which featured the well-known Viz cartoon about people like us. On entering a bar our heroes espy a craft beer enthusiast sporting a fez and perusing a copy of Artisan Wheat Beer magazine. "Look at him, with his ironic spectacles and topped beard! He couldn't tell a flagon of *Mosley's Old Spanker* from a tankard of *Belvedere's Whistling Nipsy!*"

To many CAMRA members these people are pretentious hipsters paying over the odds for cold, fizzy, alcoholic grapefruit juice. Unlike real ale, 'craft beer' has no precise definition and is thus a meaningless marketing term: even huge multinationals can call their mass-produced pish craft beer. Some fear that if CAMRA embraces craft beer it could weaken the campaign for cask ale and risk a return to the dark days of the 1970s when keg was king.

I have some sympathy with those views; I can't for the life of me understand why someone would choose to pay more money for less beer which could not possibly be as good as real ale. But it's also undeniable that it appeals to a younger audience, which CAMRA desperately needs to connect with.

Being an open-minded sort of person I thought I should at least give it a chance, try to understand its appeal.

I started with a schooner (2/3 pint) of Wild Beer Co's Pogo on keg. Around 4%. My first impressions were: too cold, but not as fizzy as I was expecting. Tropical fruit flavours, reminiscent of Slater's 1995 (cask) after it had matured for a few months (therefore a good thing). It got more enjoyable as it went on, as the beer slowly warmed in the glass.

I tried a bit of Kelly's drink, one of those seriously grapefruity bitter beers that I

continues on next page

Craft beer continued from page 13

normally find overpowering. The usual accusation against cold beer or lager is that it disguises a lack of flavour but in this case the chilling pleasantly softened the strong hop flavours.

Stuff sold in key kegs can actually be real ale: the beer is held in a bag inside the keg and the space between the bag and the rigid outer layer is filled with gas under pressure, forcing the bag to collapse and pushing the beer out. The gas does not come into direct contact with the beer, so if what went into the bag was unpasteurised, unfiltered and containing live yeast, then what comes out can still be real ale. In 2015 CAMRA's national conference accepted this idea, and it has appeared at some CAMRA beer festivals.

We tried a couple more things in cans. Mother Earth Cali Creamin' was sickly

sweet and artificial-tasting; Tailgate Peanut Butter Milk Stout smelt of popcorn and was dark, rich and satisfying. The cans were £3.60 for 355ml (ouch) but I found I was sipping rather than supping so a little went a long way. Sipping from a tulip glass...there was a different vibe, it wasn't really comparable to a session on the ale.

I'm too young to remember the infamous Watney's Red Barrel, but I had drunk keg beer occasionally in the '90s, if nothing else was available. The new craft beers bear no resemblance – they actually taste of something for a start. Like Kelly they won't usurp cask in my preference but I think there's a time and a place for them.

I looked at my birthday card again and the penny dropped: real ale tw*ts and craft beer enthusiasts - we're really two sides of the same coin. **Andy Murray**

Coming soon.....



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A preview of the 10th Stafford Beer & Cider Festival

10th

Stafford

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Entry £1

Friday 11.30am - 4pm*
Entry £1

Friday 4pm - 11pm
Entry £3

Saturday 12noon -7pm*
Entry £2

Saturday 7pm - 11pm
Entry £1

Hop on board for pirate
themed family fun on
Saturday afternoon!



Join us on our adventure to campaign for real ale!
www.staffordbeerfestival.co.uk



Turn to pages 16, 17 and 18...

Festival News

Hello everyone,

Yikes!!! Not long until the 10th Stafford Beer and Cider Festival opens, dates for the festival: 27th - 29th of July. Where has the time gone? Thankfully I have an excellent team of volunteers working with me to make this festival happen. This is my first time in terms of the role of Festival Organiser and I have a hard act to follow but I am determined to make this the most successful Festival yet!

The committee wanted to make our tenth anniversary a special one and something to remember, therefore we wanted a theme that we could then use on our publicity material and glasses for this year. A bright spark - we do have a few! - came up with the **Pirate theme**, X marks the spot (X being ten in Roman numerals). On the back of this we want to attract even more families along to the **family friendly sessions** on Friday and Saturday afternoons: Face Painters, Bouncy Castles, Brass Band, are all booked and we are looking for children and adults to dress up in pirate clothes for those sessions. A **fancy dress** competition is something we are looking at seriously. We will be dressing the bars and calling them Starboard and Port this year as well as bringing in pirate named beers from some of the Local and National breweries. Other ideas are welcome.

We have **seventy beers** (I expect this number may well grow!) please see the write-up from the head of our Beer Committee Martin Salt. They have worked really hard to produce a fantastic choice of beers this year, and look out for some old favourites! Also available are **thirty-plus Ciders** and a range of Country Wines and Bottled Beers. We will start to advertise these via Twitter



@Staffs Beer Festival and also Facebook @staffordbeerfestival.

We have chosen two **charities** this year: the Stafford and Rugeley branch of the Royal National Lifeboat institution and Stafford's own House of Bread. Both are very worthy causes which will benefit from your unspent beer tokens. Find them at rnli.org and www.hobstafford.co.uk

For your **entertainment** this year we have the following bands appearing at the Festival: on Friday Night a fabulous band called Stone Cold Sober...ish www.facebook.com/stonecoldsoberuk

On Saturday night we have a very talented lady Alexandra Jayne joining us www.alexandrajaynemusic.com and on Saturday afternoon as mentioned above we have our regular Brass Band www.blackwellconcertband.co.uk who will get your feet tapping!

It's not too late to be a **sponsor** at the Festival, please contact Andy Murray editor@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk or Kelly Porter kellycamraheartofstaffordshire@gmail.com

Please contact myself at paul.hewitt100@hotmail.co.uk if you would like to **get involved**. Unfortunately the Festival doesn't happen without a lot of "blood, sweat and tears" but I promise you it's a really friendly bunch and a good atmosphere. We still need volunteers, the more the merrier. There is a link on our

continued from previous page

website: go to

www.staffordbeerfestival.co.uk and click on the Volunteers tab.

We especially need helpers for setup and takedown but every little helps, even a few hours.

Hope to see you at the Festival and please come and say hello.

Paul Hewitt

BEER

We hope to make the 10th Stafford Beer Festival both a look back at our previous successes and a nod to the way ahead for the festival as it approaches its teenage years!

We have included on our order list some previous Stafford beer festival winners: two great Black Country favourites return with Bathams Bitter and Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild. Also reappearing is our twice award winner Fownes King Korvak's Saga alongside last year's trophy winning Bristol Beer Factory Twelve Apostles.

We have raided the archives to bring back some other great Staffordshire breweries and their beers that have sold out when we have had them at our previous festivals: Morton's Jelly Roll, Broughs Pale Ale, Peakstones Pugin's Gold, Quartz Blonde, Thornbridge return with their popular Jaipur IPA, (well not quite Staffordshire I know!) Blythe's dangerously drinkable Staffie and always a favourite Enville's sharp, refreshing Ginger. Locally our great friends at Slater's, Limestone and Titanic return with some of their fabulous beers. Slater's should provide us with a very summery and fruity Marravilla Raspberry. Limestone provide a both dark and delicious beer in Stone the Crows whilst

Titanic are steaming in with their Cappuccino Stout – Costa and Starbucks beware: a skinny latte will never be the same again!

Alongside some of these classics of 10 years gone by are some classic Bitters, Pale Ales, a few Golden Ales, some dark Porters and Stouts.

The beer list has looked at what punters like to taste and we have tried to source some wheat beers, a few fruit beers (fingers crossed for the Kiwi fruit!) and some good brown bitters. The more adventurous who like the 6% and above we hope will also be happy with seven on the wish list. And for those who remember our time in the Gatehouse Theatre (2008 – 2009) may recall a strong beer with a l-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-n-g name. It may return this year!!

We have also looked to the future and hopefully will have a few different names including a beer from the DE14 brewery and, possibly, a new brewery kid on the block with a great retro beer (if it's ready in time...).

Anyway this is the wish list, we hope to bring you all of these plus more but whatever we serve you can be assured we will have done all we can to give you a great festival whatever the tipple you hold in your hands! Cheers and all the best, see you with my pen and my smile on the badge in July!

The Beer Orderer

VOLUNTEER

No volunteers = NO FESTIVAL

Please sign up by clicking Volunteers at www.staffordbeerfestival.co.uk



CIDER

With the growth of the cider bar over the years it has been fun trying to get ciders and perries for you to enjoy. The Pink Grapefruit & Pineapple sold out so quickly last year, most people didn't get a chance to try it...think I'll get two this year.

There will be the usual favourites from Hecks, Sheppys and Olivers, but this year I'm looking at going to other producers, like Madhatters and Gregg's Pit to spice up your choice and help you to find something new for you to try.

Don't forget if you find something you like you can take some away with you to drink at home, we are also looking at doing bottles for the first time, which you can take away as well as drink at the festival.

As there is a pirate theme this year I'll be keeping an eye out for pirate named drinks. See you soon -

Swaggy
Deputy Cider Bar Manager

VENUE

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Louise Carter



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Uttoxeter & District News

Pub of the Season Spring 2017 THE ALTON BRIDGE HOTEL, ALTON



One really good piece of news for CAMRA members is the imminent reopening of the **Talbot Inn** in Alton, a listed building and long derelict pub that lies close to the Alton Bridge Hotel. Sandra and her team have been refurbishing the old building with the hope of reopening the pub to the public later in the year. We wish them the very best with their efforts.

Tom Abbott

In April, Branch Chairman Simon Ardrion, and committee members joined with local drinkers to present the district pub of the season to Sandra, the licensee of the **Alton Bridge Hotel**. Sandra and her staff have worked hard over recent years to develop the quality and range of her beers at this very popular pub/restaurant in the heart of Alton. Sandra said she was truly delighted to receive the award and wanted to work more closely with the CAMRA branch and local micro-breweries to ensure that visitors and locals enjoyed the best real ale available.



Uttoxeter District Pub of the Year 2017 THE DOG AND PARTRIDGE, MARCHINGTON

A popular village watering hole has been crowned CAMRA Pub of the Year for the second time. The Marchington pub has now won the Uttoxeter CAMRA's award for two of the three years it has been handed out. Paul Needham, who runs the Church Lane establishment, said he was "well chuffed" with his win.



On the 6th May over 40 CAMRA members descended on the **Dog and Partridge** and witnessed the presentation of the PUB OF THE YEAR award. Chris Podmore, the landlord of the Tavern, Denstone (last year's recipient) was present to hand over the award and pass on his congratulations.

Paul said: "It shows that when we arrived here four-and-a-half years ago, we dared to be different and that has paid off." The major brewers no longer call all the shots and more pubs are stocking more interesting independent brewery products in the area.

"We now even have our own local brewery, Uttoxeter Brewing Company, whose ales are excellent, and the first micropub, the **Horse and Dove**, which

means we will have to really up our game if we want any more titles."

Members of the Potteries CAMRA branch on a tour of local award winning pubs enjoyed the celebrations with their local Uttoxeter CAMRA colleagues. **TA**



Uttoxeter's new micropub **THE HORSE AND DOVE**

On Wednesday 1st March partners **Yogesh Gupta** and **Paul Blick** opened the doors to a new micropub in Uttoxeter.

The **Horse & Dove**, the Market Place Uttoxeter (ST14 8HY) provides real ale drinkers with a warm, cosy atmosphere in which to enjoy their tittle of choice.

The lads said they had been inspired to open a micro-pub during work helping a friend open one near their native Walsall. "We just loved the whole atmosphere of the place and it quite quickly established itself as a local with a real community feel that championed the old winning combination of good beer and good conversation.

"We spotted that Uttoxeter didn't have any micropubs and felt it would offer a great opportunity to fill a bit of a gap in the market. There are so many great local micro breweries in East Staffordshire



and our primary focus will be supporting them to provide a great range of ales. But we don't just focus on beer, we also provide a large range of real ciders at the Horse and Dove. Generally our micro-pub is more relaxed and, while we don't discount electronic entertainment, we are more about the drinks and the conversation than anything else." Our ground floor is part of the listed building and serves as a one-room bar with capacity for 60 people.

continued from previous page

Yogi said “We had planned to open in December, but in hindsight, that was perhaps a little optimistic, especially as it was a change of use and the premises is a Grade II Listed Building.

Yogi also added: “Business has been brilliant since we opened, the Uttoxeter people have been great and tremendously supportive, many have said they’ve been waiting for such a long time for a pub to open in Uttoxeter that sells such a good range of locally produced real ales.

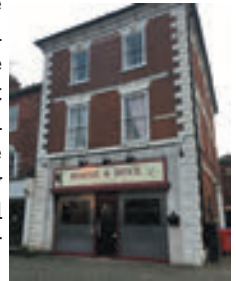
“We have six hand-pulled beers and try to put on as wide a range of beers as possible. During the 12 weeks we have been open we have tempted local drinkers with over 125 different real ales.”

Yogi continued “We fully support our local brewery the Uttoxeter Brewing Company and their excellent beers and

we make sure that we have them on our pumps on a regular basis.”

The beers have gone down particularly well with the locals of Uttoxeter so far are the Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild, the Ludlow brewery, Ludlow Gold, Wood’s Shropshire Lass and Shropshire Lad, Leatherbritches Bounder as well as beers produced in Uttoxeter: *Earthmover Gold*, the *Final Furlong*, *Paddock Porter* and *Admiral Gardner*.

The building was for many years the local Sketchleys cleaners, and even though they have been running it as a pub for some time the lads do still get the odd request from customers who come in and want to know how much it would cost to get their dry cleaning done! **TA**



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Pottering around the Potteries

OLD FACES, NEW HANDS

Under the auspices of Gary Timmins, Regional Meetings move at a cracking pace, even though they last for around four hours and there is not much light relief from the business at hand. However, light relief did come at the February Regional Meeting when **Lyn Sharpe** happened to be name-checked by one member present and the room descended into an agitated babble concerning the now notorious Lyn Effect, a babble which Gary finally had to silence with his non-existent gavel.

This is a good example of the notorious Lyn Effect, that she can reduce a Regional Meeting to an excited babble without even being there herself; however, what Lyn is really famous for is her knack of recruiting people into CAMRA in the strangest of places, such as inside taxis or on the top of helicopters.

All this hard work has very much paid off for Lyn in the past few months; as well as being one of six CAMRA members especially selected to spearhead a new recruitment campaign, she is the now the proud recipient of not only a "Special Membership Recruitment Award in Recognition of Outstanding Efforts in the Area of Membership Recruitment" (somewhat of a mouthful in itself), but she has also been garlanded with National Campaigner of the Year 2017, the highest honour a CAMRA Member can get. So congratulations to Lyn; I hope that she will not object to being referred to as an Old Face, but, just to be on the safe side, I will remain in hiding until the next edition of **Beer at Heart**. Probably in the **Lymestone Vaults**.

After many years organising fantastic coach trips not only to hither but also to yon, Jim Melia stepped down from the role



Lyn receiving the Campaigner of the Year award from CAMRA Chair Colin Valentine

of Social Secretary at the Potteries AGM in March. But panic ye not, the branch soon unearthed a brand new Social Secretary in the shape of one Nick Willis, Our Man from Brierley Hill; Nick organised his first social in May, when a motley gang of thirsty CAMRA members invaded various hostelries around Uttoxeter and Ashbourne, including two pubs that were not even on the postulated itinerary.

Beginning at the **Dog & Partridge** in Marchington and ending at the **Black Lion** in Butterton, a great day was had by all, even the two members of Heart of Staffs branch who completely failed in their stated mission to alight from the train at Stoke Station [*not our fault! Ed.*] and subsequently had to formulate a convoluted and no doubt sheep-laden method of joining the party in Ashbourne. Nick has many more trips up his sleeve, so keep an eye on Potter's Bar if you wish to partake of a pint or three with us; and I'm sure that he won't object to being referred to as a New Hand.

Cheers! Have a great summer...

Martin Perry
Editor, **Potters Bar**



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The advertisement features a man in a grey shirt holding two large glasses of beer up to his eyes like binoculars. In the foreground, a hand holds a smartphone displaying the WhatPub website. The background is a blurred street scene. On the right side, there is a logo for CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) and the text "WHAT?PUB" in large, bold letters. Below this, it says "Thousands of pubs at your fingertips!" and "whatpub.com". Further down, it states "Featuring over 35,000 real ale pubs". At the bottom, there are three columns of text, each starting with "WHAT?PUB".

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35,000 real ale pubs

WHAT?PUB
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pubs featured

WHAT?PUB
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by thousands of
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WHAT?PUB
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who produce the UK's
best beer & pub guide

To Be or Knot to Be: this is the answer...

In the last issue Phil Vickers debunked some myths and posed some questions about the famous Stafford knot. A reader got in touch with the whole story

Myths and legends abound about the origins of the Stafford knot and can generally be dismissed, as Phil Vickers pointed out in the last edition of **Beer at Heart**.

The knot badge has been used by ancestors of the present Lord Stafford since at least the 15th century and probably the late 14th. A badge was worn by servants and retainers who were not entitled to a coat of arms.

An ecclesiastical vestment now in the Victoria and Albert Museum is probably the earliest evidence of its use. This richly embroidered chasuble appears to have been made for the wedding of Edmund, 5th Earl of Stafford, to Lady Anne Plantagenet in 1398.

Lady Anne was a granddaughter of King Edward III and a descendant of the powerful de Bohun family, Earls of Hereford, Essex and Northampton.

The chasuble shows the Stafford knot and the de Bohun swan badge, as well as their coats of arms. The vestment would have been worn by the priest who celebrated a nuptial mass after solemnising the marriage.

Archaeologists excavating Stafford Castle unearthed another piece of evidence in the form of a floor tile bearing the knot. This could date from the construction of the castle by Ralph, first Earl of Stafford, in 1348,

The Borough of Stafford adopted the knot as part of its unofficial coat of arms in the late 16th century. These arms, the



Staffords' red chevron on a gold shield with a knot at the apex (*above*), were never approved by the heralds. It was, however, adopted as the flag of the county of Staffordshire in 2016.

In 1614 the borough was granted a quite different coat of arms featuring a silver castle on a red shield with two gold knots above and a gold lion in the base. These arms remained in use until 1974.

By 1794 the knot was adopted as a badge of the Staffordshire Yeomanry, which was raised at the Swan Hotel in Stafford. Soon after it was also adopted by the North and South Staffordshire regiments.

By the mid-19th century many Staffordshire potters were also using it as a trademark, often with their initials between the loops.

Staffordshire County Council was granted its coat of arms in 1931, featuring a Stafford knot on the red chevron taken from the Stafford family arms, with the addition of a gold lion on a blue stripe at the top of the gold shield. The county council's motto is 'The Knot Unites'.

Neil Thomas

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Contact Us

Heart of Staffordshire branch

Branch officers elected 9th May 2017:

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contact@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

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Treasurer: **Dave Tomkinson**

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Membership Secretary: **Kelly Porter**

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Webmaster: **Martin White**

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Clubs Officer: **Paul Dykta**

clubs@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Pubs Officer: **vacant**

Young Members Officer: **vacant**

If you're interested in taking on any of the vacant roles, or joining the committee in a general capacity, please contact the Secretary.

Uttoxeter & District sub-branch

Branch contact & Chair: **Simon Ardron**

Email: CamraSocial@ardron.co.uk

Website: www.uttoxetercamra.org



Search for **Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA** or **Uttoxeter & District CAMRA**

Contacting You

We endeavour to contact our members each month via email with details of socials, meetings, beer festivals and news items.

Beer at Heart should be readily available from your local real ale pub and will be published in PDF on the branch website but if you would like to be posted a copy of Beer at Heart four times a year for £4 (to cover costs) please contact the Editor.

Thank You:

Tom Abbott, Neil Butler, Louise Carter, Paul Dykta, Paul Hewitt, Martin Perry, Kelly Porter, Martin Salt, Steven Swain, Neil Thomas, Phil Vickers and Warwick Printing.

Articles, letters and suggestions for the next issue gratefully received by the Editor. The next issue of **Beer at Heart** will appear in September 2017.

Consumer information

If you have any complaints over short measures etc. and have no satisfaction from the pub in question please contact Staffordshire Trading Standards:

Tel: 0300 111 8045

E: businessadvice@staffordshire.gov.uk

Post: Staffordshire County Council,
2 Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2DH

Pubs on the 101 part 3

The first stop on entering Stafford is Chell Road (opposite Sainsbury's) and into the **Lamb** where *Hobgoblin* and *St. Austell Proper Job* started our day. Crossing the road and passing the Chinese (ex-New Inn), then left at the Indian (ex-Castle Tavern) brings you to the **Railway**, a popular end-of-terrace pub: draught Bass on offer here.



On exiting follow the rail line to the station, cross the road then bus (101 of course) or walk to the **Sun Inn**, a Titanic pub that sells up to 12 ales (half of them guests) plus ciders. A worthwhile short walk is to cross the road (left of door) on to the Wolverhampton Road and up to the **Star & Garter** (*above*), where the landlady keeps excellent ales and is planning to add ciders. Black Sheeeeep joined the flock here. On exiting go up the adjoining road and you will come to the **Bear & Pheasant**, too close to miss. Carrying on in the same direction will bring you to the **Floodgate**, Stafford's first micropub, and our Urban Pub of the Year; a dark beer is almost guaranteed in its five ales, also a few ciders plus all the whisky you need. A few doors down is the **Grapes Music Bar** (linked to the Bear & Pheasant) now opening in the day serving real ales. That concludes the walk* as the Sun is over the road; next stop the Gatehouse.

Right by this stop is Ye **Olde Rose & Crown**, the brewery tap for Joules where their ales are served in great condition e.g. *Slumbering Monk* - nice. Turn left on leaving and go around the Shire Hall to reach the **Market Vaults** (was Chains to us old folk), well known for its burgers as well as ales, *Hobgoblin* again here. Go right out of the door and right at the road end should bring you to Stafford's latest brewery pub, Black Country's Shrewsbury Arms, selling ten ales and a number of ciders, it's May so *Pig on the Wall* [a mild] was my choice.

	BEER	BREWERY	COLOUR	PRICE
1	PFG	Black Country Arms	Amber	£3.50
2	Pig on the Wall	Black Country Arms	Amber	£3.50
3	Fireside	Black Country Arms	Amber	£3.50
4	Milky Way	Black Hole	Amber	£3.50
5	Beacon Hill	Evening	Amber	£3.50
6	Meridian	Devering	Dark Stout	£3.50
7	Wendell	Green Shires	Golden	£3.50
8	Mile by Mile	Haypole	Blonde	£3.50
9	Topaz Cluster	The Beer Studio	Blond	£3.50
10	Chou Reaction	Fried Wheel	Blond	£3.50

Getting there you would pass two clubs: the **Royal British Legion** and the **County Staff Club**, both private but the latter does welcome visitors especially CAMRA members, just knock the door if locked. The Gatehouse stop is on this road if you walk in a straight line left out of these venues. Carrying on will take you past the **Vine Hotel** and bar (Marston's) then a right turn and you can finish at the **Butlers Bell** (Wetherspoons), adjacent to Gaol Square and the buses back north.

*Or you can walk the main street from the Grapes to Gaol Square and take in: the **Picture House** ('spoons), **Coach & Horses** and the **Swan Hotel**.

Paul Dykta

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