

Beer at Heart



West Midlands CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year 2017
Magazine of the Heart of Staffordshire branch of CAMRA
Incorporating Uttoxeter & District sub-branch and covering Stafford
• Stone • Eccleshall • Penkridge • Gnosall • and surrounding areas

Time called on the Green Man *The needless loss of a village pub*



Read the story on page 16

Also in this issue:

Christmas Carols at the Anchor
Good Beer Guide 2020 voting opens

Our trip to Lichfield

All the latest pub & brewery news
and loads more



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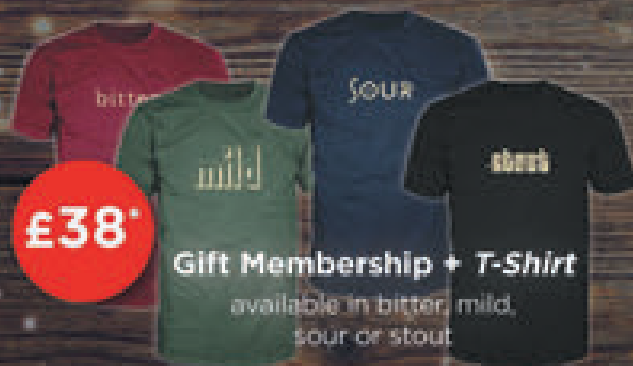
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Beer at Heart

Winner of West Midlands CAMRA Branch Magazine of the Year 2017

Welcome from the Editor

I was recently given a copy of a 1975 guide to the pubs of this area, produced by the nascent CAMRA branch. It's a fascinating glimpse back to a time when opening times were short and hair was long; pubs were plentiful but real ale was in retreat. How times change!

Although it's always sad when a former pub is demolished or converted to something else, usually it's been closed and boarded up for some time due to a combination of issues, and one must reluctantly accept it's never coming back.

But sometimes it could have been avoided, and we believe this is the case with the pub on the cover, the Green Man in Hixon. In October the council took less than ten minutes to decide this 150 year-old pub, which is still trading, could be demolished. The objections raised, the Asset of Community Value listing, the lack of effort to sell the pub as a going concern, the consortium of locals fundraising to buy the pub, the stipulations of the local plan to protect pubs at all costs...all were ignored. Read the sorry tale on pages 16-17.

Around ten years ago the council granted planning permission to demolish another pub; in September we were delighted to declare said pub—the Greyhound, Stafford—our Autumn Pub of the Season. The 'hound is a hugely popular and successful pub. Planners—what do they know?!

Andy Murray

editor@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

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Beer at Heart is published quarterly by Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA. Designed and edited by Andrew Murray. Opinions expressed are those of the author and may not represent those of CAMRA, the local branch or editor. Beer at Heart is (c) CAMRA Ltd.

Printed by Warwick Printing www.warwickprinting.co.uk

Next copy deadline: 15th FEBRUARY 2019 ADVERTISING RATES ON PAGE 15

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Chair's Chat

Welcome to the Winter edition of the award winning Beer at Heart magazine.

CAMRA as a society has many aims and objectives, keeping pubs open is a prime example, the beer festival as a money generator to support the many causes put forward by the committee is another. We also try to put forward ideas in the magazine to encourage members to meet, discuss and drink beer, and then see where we end up.

The Stoke beer festival was mentioned in the Autumn Beer at Heart and I know many Heart of Staffordshire members visited over the three days. I went with friends on Saturday, my only free day, and while the company was excellent it looked like the beer would run out after a very hectic and full Friday night. Fortunately extra supplies arrived in the nick of time and a pleasant time was had by almost all. While there were a few niggles with the new venue I feel they can be worked on and improved.

As a branch we managed a trip out to Lichfield, a place I have visited many times but not on a beer trail. Excellently organised by Andy, and joined by new members who had seen the mention in the magazine and branch emails, we had a pleasant day checking out the beers and locations available. It seemed to me that some were attracting plenty of customers on a Saturday afternoon who were out for company, beer and loud chatting!

Please keep an eye out for the next organised trip and come along; it's not all beer talk, sometimes it's brewing, beer festivals etc! Voting for our Good Beer Guide entries will start soon—have a look on page 7 for details of that. If you need more information, email me and I can let you know what is happening.

Frank Bryden
Chair, Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA
chair@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Branch Diary

NB dates and venues are subject to change, so before making a special journey please check the diary on our website:
www.heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk/diary

DECEMBER 2018

SUNDAY 23rd: CAROL SINGING at the ANCHOR, HIGH OFFLEY. Arrive 12 for 12.30pm. All welcome. Some of us will be catching the 09.35 No.5 bus from Stafford and walking to the pub from Gnosall. For more details see page 7

JANUARY 2019

THURSDAY 10th: WINTER PUB OF THE SEASON PRESENTATION at the BIRD IN HAND, Stafford, 8pm. All welcome.

TUESDAY 22nd: BRANCH MEETING at the STAR, Penkridge, 8pm. All members welcome.

THURSDAY 31st: BEER FESTIVAL 2019 first organising meeting. Ye Olde Rose & Crown, 8pm. All welcome.

FEBRUARY 2019

THURSDAY 7th: QUIZ at STAR & GARTER, Wolverhampton Rd, Stafford. 8pm. All welcome.

SATURDAY 16th: LIVERPOOL SOCIAL. Details TBC. Heart of Staffs CAMRA members will be notified of details by email closer to the time (or contact the Editor for more info—contact details on page 29)

Look out for more branch events in the regular members email

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOCIALS? Contact social@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Pub and Club news

STAFFORD

The former Tap & Spile on Peel Terrace has re-opened as the **Tap Steakhouse**, following a major refurb and rebrand. Although the emphasis is now on dining, the bar has been retained (given a 'distressed' look) and four cask ales are offered—Sharp's *Doom Bar* and *Atlantic* are permanent; Marstons *Pedigree*, Shepherd Neame *Sptifire* and Adnams *Ghost Ship* have also featured.

A planning application has been submitted to convert the old Dorothy Perkins/Burttons shop on Gaolgate Street to a **Hogarth's Gin Palace**. Most of their pubs seem to serve cask ales as well as craft beers and (of course) gin.

Round the side of the Market Vaults, in what used to be Satchmo's Lazy Bar (one of many incarnations), the **Dog House** is 'coming soon', promising gourmet hot dogs, gin, rum and beer. STOP PRESS: the Dog House opened on 30th November, selling one cask beer (*Doom Bar*).

Tim and Janet are settling in at the **Spittal Brook** and the pub has regained its Cask Marque status.

The are plans for a 'craft beer community hub' at Woodings Yard, Bailey Street (above Francesco's Hair Academy). According to the applicant "It will be the town centre's first dedicated beer bottle shop and taproom—providing a wide, and ever-changing, selection of craft beers from across the UK in bottles, cans and keg... Longer term plans include establishing a nanobrewery on site, which will also serve as a community brewing space." Sounds interesting...



The Tap Steakhouse

The **Bird in Hand** will be our Winter Pub of the Season please join us for the award presentation at 8pm, Thursday 10th January.

HILDERSTONE

Dave Westwood, licensee of the **Roebuck**, died on 2nd November. Our condolences to his wife Emma and family. They are determined to carry on running the pub.



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STONE

The **Bear**, a new café-bar has opened in the old HSBC premises on the High Street. It doesn't seem to have any real ale but it does have two apparently keg craft beers.

ANYPLACE

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.

Please vote!

GOOD BEER GUIDE

The 2019 Good Beer Guide is in the shops now and would make an excellent Christmas present, for yourself or somebody else! But we already need to start thinking about the 2020 guide.



Heart of Staffs CAMRA members should head to www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DFG9SXN before 11th January 2019 and pick your favourites (up to 19 as we 19 places in the Guide).

Members can also attend the shortlisting meetings—full details will be sent out by email in due course. And keep beer scoring on WhatPub.com, this is a crucial factor in determining which pubs make the grade.

Inn Dulci Jubilo

Join us for Carols at the Anchor

Maintaining our Christmas tradition

we will be descending on the Anchor at High Offley to sing carols (and drink Wadworth 6X) on the last Sunday before Christmas. It's a joyful occasion in a very special pub, situated on the banks of the Shropshire Union Canal.

Do come and join us if you can on Sunday 23rd December from noon. Singing usually commences around 12.30pm.

Singers are rewarded for their exertions with a piece of the finest Christmas cake you're ever likely to taste (or see). Baked by branch committee member Paul Haycock and impeccably iced by our friend and Beer Festival stalwart Louise Carter.

Some of us catch the bus from Stafford to



Gnosall and walk to the Anchor along the canal (4–5 miles approx.) If you don't fancy that, or it's simply not possible, we may be able to arrange transport—please get in touch with the Editor (contact details on page 29).

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Pub of the Season

The Greyhound, Stafford

The Greyhound pub is a real quality boozier with a great atmosphere and a group of very friendly regulars. It is the kind of pub you can pass the hours away and choose to either blend into the background with a tablet to read the news (or a good old fashioned newspaper!) or become centre stage in the latest Brexit or TV show discussion with the many characters who drink in there.

A large bar area with a big screen showing sports leads to a very cosy lounge area, often with an open fire roaring in the winter which is very welcoming. A blackboard informs you of the choice of eight handpulls (four are visible in the lounge and the other four in the bar servery area) on offer. Another blackboard in the lounge tells you what's in the cellar so you can also plan your next visit. A gin mirror displays a large selection of gins also being served.

Bradfield Farmers Blonde is THE number 1 selling beer. Most other beers vary from all over the country but Steve the landlord regularly raids Yorkshire for some of the guest beers on tap.

The Greyhound has been a strong beer drinking pub in Stafford for many years now and whilst not classed as town centre it really is only a short walk from the north end of the high street. So stretch those legs a little further on your next pub crawl round the town—it's a real gem and one you will be back to again and again.

Martin Salt

Our Winter pub of the season is the Bird in Hand, Victoria Square, Stafford. Please join us for the presentation on Thursday 10th January from 8pm



Steve Tideswell(r) is presented with the PotS certificate by branch chair Frank Bryden

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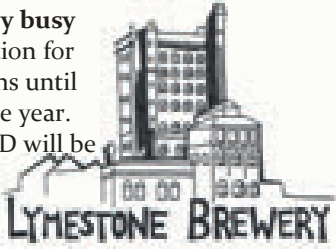
Brewery news

LYMESTONE of Stone

www.lymestonebrewery.co.uk

Brewery very busy with production for Wetherspoons until the end of the year. STONE COLD will be available nationwide, so quite a

stock needs to be built up in the distribution warehouse. Consequently only a short run of ABDOMINAL STONEMAN is to be brewed for bottling.



Monthly beers for the beginning of 2019 will be:

January - SEVEN STONE WEAKLING 4.7%

February - HEART OF STONE 4.4%

Stray Cat lager and pilsner are still both selling well and a supply of Stray Cat Milk has been produced for both cask and keg.

Monthly brewery tours are still run monthly on Friday evenings and will continue next year. There is a slightly different format in the case of group bookings, in that up to 50 tickets will be available at £15 each, with Lymestone donating £5 from each sale to a charity nominated by the group. Groups are also free to fundraise during the evening, e.g. raffles, tombola etc.

The **Lymestone Vaults** in Newcastle reached the finals of The Taste of Staffordshire pub of the year awards and came second.

The **Borehole** now has a Tasting Club. For a joining fee of £15, priority booking can be gained for each evening, as numbers are limited, with a discounted entrance ticket. A joining gift is also available. Already staged evenings have

been gin and Belgian beers, with whisk(e)y coming up on the 13th December. Both pubs continue to be busy.

Lymestone wish everyone a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Neil Butler

Lymestone Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO)

IZAAK WALTON BREWHOUSE of Norton Bridge

Whitehouse Farm, Cold Norton, Stone,
Staffordshire ST15 0NS
izaakbrew@mail.com 01785 760780

Happily, I can report that since the large investment in reverse osmosis equipment during the summer, the mineral content of the water has stabilised and consequently the consistency and quality of the brews have improved. This has led to more regular brewing activity and increasing sales.

A good proportion of the beer is going to Eccleshall, with all three beers being regular on the bar at The Bell. The Kings Arms and Little George also selling well. Elsewhere, other outlets include the Swan in Stone, the Malt & Hops in Stoke and more recently George & the Dragon in Gnosall.

The three beers remain as previously reported: AMBER NYMPH, LAST CAST and THE LAST DROP. For Christmas a limited brew will be produced, amounting to 6 barrels. It will be strong and dark, named SAINTS AND SINNERS. Andy is keeping the final strength up his sleeve.

A request was made via the Uttoxeter Brewing Co. for a cask for Nottingham Beer Festival. A barrel of Amber Nymph was provided and received some good reviews. So the lads here would like to thank the lads there, via this magazine, for the introduction. The same beer also went

down well at our festival in July.

The only other news is that the brewery has now acquired a white van, a vintage Citroen. This is soon to be decorated with some appropriate brewery advertising, hopefully to hide the dirt and rust.

Neil Butler, Izaak Walton BLO

PEAKSTONES ROCK of Alton

www.peakstonesrock.co.uk

David writes: Have been busy brewing. Since the end of the hot summer days, sales have improved. Bottles of Oblivion and Nemesis into Alton Towers have seen significant growth this year. Very pleased with Bridge Pale ABV 3.6%, brewed using Jester hops. Now brewing award-winning Submission ABV 5.0% again: chestnut in colour, just right on a cold night.

Delighted with the success of Crossways Micropub in Blythe Bridge – Staffordshire Moorlands CAMRA Village Pub of the Year and Highly Commended for Cider. Just a short train journey from Uttoxeter.



UTTOXETER BREWING COMPANY

Facebook: @UttoxeterBrewingCompany

Tom from UBC writes:

Expansion Plans moving ahead

We have identified the new site for our brewery. It is to be located in a Grade II listed building found very close to the middle of Uttoxeter on land behind the old coaching inn the White Hart.

Work on the 10-barrel brewery started in October and is due to be completed in early January. It is hoped that tanks and brewing



New UBC site

equipment will be fitted early in the New Year and the brewery be working at capacity by mid-February.

Robin Hood Festival

We had a great day out at the Robin Hood Beer and Cider festival in Nottingham back in October. We supplied six different beers to the festival: the ever popular PADDOCK PORTER (4.8%), FINAL FURLONG (4.5%), ADMIRAL GARDNER (4.5%), UXONIAN (4.9%), SARGEANT'S SPECIAL ALE (4.6%) and YOGI BEER (6%).

We were fortunate while there to meet up with some great lads, the brewers from the Izaak Walton Brewery, Andy, Phil and Bernard who were also exhibiting ales at the festival.



Uttoxeter BC & Izaak Walton United

The festival had to move this year to the Motorpoint Arena due to building works taking place at the castle. However, it still managed to keep up the massive range of beers, with over 1050 different beers being available from over 240 breweries.

More brewery news on the next page...

Brewery news continued

SLATER'S of Stafford

www.slattersales.co.uk

Hazel writes:

The bar continues to go from strength to strength and is looking forward to a busy Christmas season. Please check the Facebook page for opening hours and events.

Brewery tours are now finished for the year and will recommence on 1st February 2019. BLITZEN is now available in cask and bottle, and is joined by the welcome return of EMPEROR in a limited edition bottle run. Both are available from the brewery and also now at the bar – perfect for stocking up for Christmas!

Our PREMIUM bitter has been selected as the ale in Aldi's brand new Steak & Ale pie and is available in stores nationwide.



TITANIC of Burslem

www.titanicbrewery.co.uk

Facebook: @titanicbrewery

Twitter: @Titanic_Brewers



Amy writes:

Bod Update!

Bod Stoke is now OPEN! Be sure to pop in for a refreshment whether you are traveling via train or just fancy coming down to see what we have been up to. We're open from 6am (8am on Sundays) and the bar is open from 8am every day.

Bod Trentham had been delayed due to the planning process but we are delighted that permission has now been granted for the site at the old NatWest with works planned to start very soon. We are now looking to be open early 2019.

Plum Porter Grand Reserve & Port Infused

Based on the original Plum Porter, these specials are just as sweet and fruity, but with greater complexity. Our festive beers are available in 330ml bottles for the Grand Reserve, and Port Infused in 750ml & 2l bottles from the brewery shop in Burslem, online and in our pubs. Chocolate & Vanilla Stout bottles are also back in stock, the perfect chocolatey treat!

Celebrate Christmas with us!

Our Christmas menus are available at the Sun, Stafford and our other food pubs (the White Star, Stoke, the Roebuck, Leek & the Cheshire Cheese, Buxton). Details on the website or directly from the pubs.

Christmas Gifts

Our festive gift bags, bottles of Titanic gin, beer gift packs and Titanic merch to name a few are available from the brewery shop.



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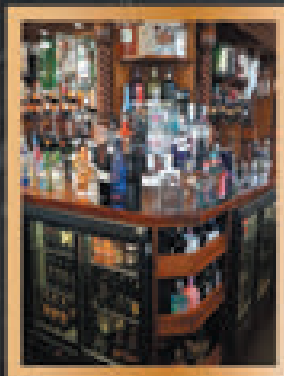
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Pubs *not* on the 101

Paul leaves behind the rugged beauty of Stafford's North End for a holiday in the sun

No buses this time, but we did take a trip to Crete. As we don't lay by the pool or get sand in our bits, we quite often walk (amble) the streets, lanes and tracks, doing a little birdwatching on the way.

Six kilometres from our hotel was the fairly new Cretan brewery, Zounaki. So off we set, over the road, up the hill in the general direction of said ale maker. Three hours and somewhat more than 6km later we arrived at the same time as the tourist land train, in the middle of a talk.



Definitely not Hanley

We were welcomed by a very pleasant young lady, who informed us that they sell small samples (pass). We ordered a half litre of each of the beer on the card: Blonde, Pale and Dark. All cask. As a dark ale man I was surprised that the blonde came out as best - two more please. On delivery we were told that there was one more ale: Ginger-Weiss—two of my favourite words.

Ready for the trek back and inquiring on a shorter route, a bowl of nibbles arrived and we were told our next drink was on the house! I love ginger, I love the Greeks.

I'm informed the word on their logo—CHARMA—means NICE. Well that goes



for the people as well as their beer.

They now run a bus to the brewery on a daily basis. So get off your ~~arse~~ sunbed and find what there is inland.

Paul Dykta

P.S. We found this beer at a local bar (a lot goes to Athens) where the lady informed us 'this beer you have to drink in three days or throw it away.' Some pubs over here should be told that.

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Co-Op Plans Call Time for Hixon's Green Man

At a planning meeting on 17th October borough councillors voted to approve an application to demolish the Green Man at Hixon. Usually this is the fate of a closed, boarded up pub but the Green Man, a freehouse, was open and trading as this decision was made. Both national and local planning guidelines emphasise the retention of community facilities and amenities, including pubs and in a Hixon Parish Council survey of local residents 70% of respondents wished to see the Green Man retained as a public house.

At the planning meeting Hixon parish council chair Mick Kelly explained that the parish council are opposed to the proposals, giving numerous objections, and in support of retaining the Green Man stating that it was listed as an asset of community value (ACV).

Steve Edgeller, representing the pub's owner Steve Rabjohns, gave a very smooth speech in support of the proposed scheme, extolling the virtues of a new Co-Op store. The scheme also received the support of Haywood and Hixon ward borough councillor Alan Perkins. Earlier in the planning process councillor Perkins had 'called in' the planning application, stating at that time "Highways issues. Large increase in (traffic) volumes through the village; the road narrows in this area. No proven need for further convenience retail." But speaking at the planning meeting in his capacity as ward councillor, he was in support of the application saying that a new Co-op store will create competition for convenience shopping in Hixon. Councillor Perkins previously ran the existing McColls convenience store in the village for seven years.



Prior to the meeting there were 58 objections against losing the pub forwarded to the planning department with only 10 in support, one of which was from one of the landowners. Objections included loss of a community hub and facility, increased traffic, no evidence that the pub is unviable or that the owner attempted to sell the pub as a going concern, inadequate parking at the proposed new retail unit and that the development is contrary to the neighbourhood plan. Yet, at the meeting there was little scrutiny of the issues raised by objectors, or for that matter by supporters - in fact only three planning committee councillors spoke during the meeting. The thought occurred; how many of these councillors had ever visited the Green Man or for that matter even knew where it was?

Councillor Carolyn Trowbridge (Rowley) said "It's a shame when you lose a pub but if it's not being used there is no point. It is what it is, it's not a protected building so I'm not going to try and protect this building in anyway. I don't know why this is even here [before the planning committee]."

Councillor Stewart Learoyd (Haywood and Hixon) said “I’ve been lucky enough to live in rural locations for a long period of time and a pub is crucial. Nevertheless the reality is there doesn’t seem to be sufficient customer support for two public houses in the area [the Bank House is the other] and I don’t see any opportunity to regenerate this pub...so I propose the recommendation is accepted.”

Councillor Evan G R Jones (Barlaston) asked if the approval of the application would affect the ACV status of the pub and the borough council’s legal services manager Ian Curran explained that the ACV was separate to planning so this point was dismissed. With no further debate, discussion or questions by councillors the chair asked the committee to vote on the matter. Councillor Trowbridge proposed to

accept the planners’ recommendation to approve the application and this was seconded by Councillor Andrew Harp (Milwich). Only one councillor, William Kemp (Coton) voted to reject the application, which was approved on a vote of 12 for and 1 against.

Minutes and a recording of the planning meeting are available on Stafford Borough Council’s website.

So following the allowed representations the councillors took just seven minutes to decide to permit the demolition of a public house which has served the community of Hixon for 150 years.

Dave Tomkinson

- *The Green Man is expected to cease operating by the end of 2018*

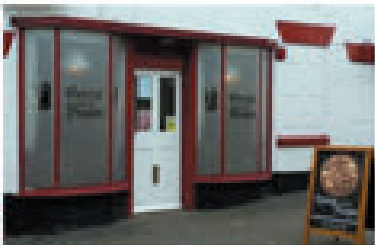
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Lichfield Branch Trip

The city's famous son Samuel Johnson hated puns so let's keep it literal

On a crisp Saturday morning in October, six branch members boarded a train in Stafford. Six soon became nine, and eventually 11 of us convened to seek out the best beers and ciders in Lichfield.

After a smooth journey our first pint was just a minute round the corner from the station at the **Bitter-Suite** (on Upper St. John Street). The cosiness of this micropub was evident instantly and the owners made us feel very welcome. Amongst the many wonderful things about the Bitter-Suite is the fact that it has brought the site of a long-closed pub—the Bridge Inn—back to life. Then there is the novelty of table service – there's no bar, but you take a seat, make your choice from the chalkboard (pictured) and the beer – served on gravity from a back room - comes to you. In hindsight though I wouldn't've chosen the *Myrica Gale Stout* (flavoured with bog myrtle - I love you Purple Moose but what were you thinking?!). The Bitter-Suite is the sort of place you could easily spend all afternoon in, but we had a schedule to stick to!

Next stop was 55 **Wade Street**, a shiny and modern bar. Like most of the pubs we visited, it offered a discount on cask ales to CAMRA members on production of a membership card. It being Halloween time it seemed appropriate to try Davenport's *Pumpkin Toffee Stout*, which was decent enough.

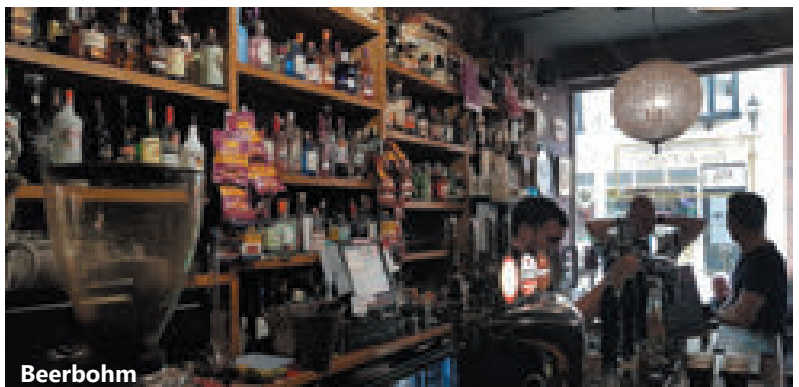
With no time to waste we cut a



The Bitter-Suite's chalkboard

path through the city centre to the **Whippet Inn** on Tamworth Street; another micropub, reminiscent in size, layout and beer range (big-flavoured microbrewery fayre) of Stafford's Floodgate. The beer was fine (some of it was unfinned) but it was a bit chilly so we kept our coats on. This was planned as a scran-intake point as I had read on WhatPub that they did crusty cobs and pork pies - alas there was only crisps and scratchings, however a splendid bakery across the road made up for it.

Going for a change of style our next pub was the more traditional **Duke of York**, a Joule's house on Greenhill. Claiming to be the oldest pub in Lichfield (1644) it is Grade II-listed. Quite plain looking from



Beerbohm

outside, the interior is very impressive, filled with oak beams and little nooks and real fires. The seasonal Joule's brew Moon Madness was the popular choice with our group, and did not disappoint.

A little behind schedule now we headed back in the direction of the Whippet, to the establishment next door—**Beerbohm**.

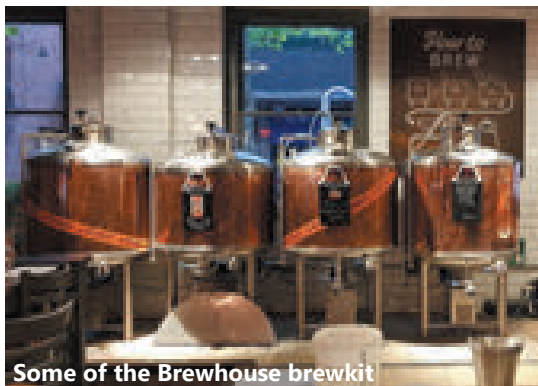
This is the local CAMRA branch pub of the year and was definitely one of the highlights of the day. Beerbohm has a continental café-bar feel, and a wonderful

atmosphere enhanced by the luxurious décor (think gilded mirrors and chandeliers). Four real ales plus a decent foreign draught and bottle selection. The downstairs bar was packed but Beerbohm has an upstairs area where we all found a seat. You can also take your own grub in there.

Five down, two to go: catching merely a glimpse of Lichfield's awe-inspiring cathedral we trotted over to the **Brewhouse & Kitchen**, which had to be included as they make their own beer on site. The blonde ale *Tricky Spires* was very quaffable. For the record, the mix-up where I ended up with the biggest plate of nachos was entirely accidental (I'm sorry!).

The food having slowed us down we were now way behind schedule. Most sensibly opted to call it a day and catch the train home, but

the three of us who kept going were rewarded with a great pint of Church End's *Goats Milk*, last year's Champion Beer of Britain, in the **Horse & Jockey**. A very popular establishment, for many a year (including 2017) the H&J won local CAMRA pub of the year – it hasn't dipped in quality, there is just more competition now.



Some of the Brewhouse brewkit

It's only £5.90 for an off-peak day return from Stafford to Lichfield, so I will definitely be going back soon – possibly venturing no further than the Bitter-Suite! The cost of an off-peak day return from Stone rises to a shocking £17.90.

Instead, split your ticket Stone to Stafford return, Stafford to Lichfield return – this brings the price down to around £10. Oh, and make sure your ticket is to Lichfield City, not Trent Valley.

Thanks to everyone who came on this trip, particularly new recruits John, Sue and Andy. Anyone fancy a trip to Liverpool soon?

Andy Murray



The Gang (minus two)

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Uttoxeter & District News

Good Beer Entrants

Uttoxeter & District CAMRA is pleased to announce that the four entrants from the district in the 2019 Good Beer Guide are **Dog & Partridge** Marchington, **Horse & Dove** Uttoxeter, **Old Swan** Uttoxeter and the **Raddle** in Hollington. Entry into the GBG is amongst the highest accolades a pub can receive; this award is voted on and awarded by CAMRA members from any area who visit the pub and score the beer for quality. You can be sure of getting a good pint in any of the GBG pubs.

We are also able to commend pubs and clubs with our own Seasonal Awards and Pub & Club of the Year. Our winners for 2018 were **Horse & Dove**, Uttoxeter, as Pub of The Year and **Doveridge Club** as Club of the Year. Additionally, we are delighted to announce that **Doveridge Club** is also runner up in the Regional Club of the Year competition covering the whole West Midlands CAMRA region (see next page).



U&D Pub of the Year

than ever before. With 18 pubs a week closing across the country we are losing a valuable community hub from many locations. It is therefore important that we recognise pubs selling good beer and encourage responsible drinking in licensed premises in a community setting and encourage everyone to visit their local pubs and clubs to ensure they remain open. I would like to congratulate the four entries to the GBG and the Club of the Year for maintaining very high standards all year which makes them such deserving winners.

Simon Ardron
Chair, Uttoxeter & District CAMRA

Dog & Partridge, Marchington
info@dogandpartridgemarchington.co.uk
<https://whatpub.com/pubs/STA/1059>
Horse & Dove, Uttoxeter
info@horsendove.co.uk 07538880849
<https://whatpub.com/pubs/UDS/2999>
Raddle Inn, Hollington
peter@logcabin.co.uk – 07779 264277
<https://whatpub.com/pubs/POT/1429>
Old Swan, Uttoxeter
p5367@jdwetherspoon.co.uk
<https://whatpub.com/pubs/STA/2748>

There are many good pubs in our district and we would like to praise them all however the Good Beer Guide has a limited number of spaces and we can only recognise a few. As Chairman I am delighted that we have such an improvement in the standards in the pubs and seeing a much greater variety of beers

Queen of Clubs

Heartiest congratulations to Eddy and Jan at the **Doveridge Village Club** for their runner-up award for the CAMRA West Midlands Club of the Year.

This highly contested CAMRA competition for clubs through the whole of the West Midlands compares the quality and range of the real ales available to local drinkers.

The CAMRA West Midlands region covers an enormous area including the counties of Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, and Staffordshire and includes nearly 400 hundred of different clubs of all types; sporting, social, political and traditional working men's and country clubs.

To achieve a runner-up place is a very high accolade and one well deserved by Eddy and the whole team at Doveridge village club.

At the presentation of the award during one of the club's regular real ale festivals, Chair of the Uttoxeter District CAMRA branch Simon Ardron said "the award was a fantastic result



Eddy and Jan with their award

and a recognition of the hard work and dedication of the whole club team. It shows that the quality of the real ale available in North Staffordshire is getting better all of the time." The Doveridge club welcomes CAMRA members.

ed.greg@icloud.com - 07813 635557
<https://whatpub.com/pubs/ABD/1505>

Ploughing a New Furrow

News from Uttoxeter is that the **Plough** on the Stafford road is undergoing a refurbishment and is due to open in December.

Recently sold by Punch, this Uttoxeter landmark is now a free house in private hands and promises to be a cracking pub once again.

Neale Chandler, the new owner said, "We're delighted to get our hands on the Plough and can't wait to have it open and trading again.

The Plough is steeped in local history and the work we're doing there aims to bring it back to the fore of the local community. We'll have great selection of cask ale, including the local brew from Uttoxeter Brewing Co, plus keg products and a top notch choice of gins, spirits and softs as well. In addition to this we'll also have a great pub menu with an emphasis on home-made and fresh. Like our



other pub, the Kings Arms in Eccleshall, the Plough will simply be a proper pub with consistent opening hours and aimed squarely at the local community who we hope will support our endeavours there."

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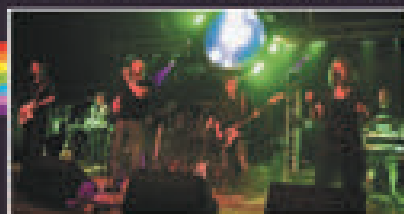
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Uttoxeter & District Pub of the Season

The Bull's Head, Alton

In October Uttoxeter branch members made their way to this very popular village pub, to present landlord James Miller with his well-deserved Pub of the Season award.



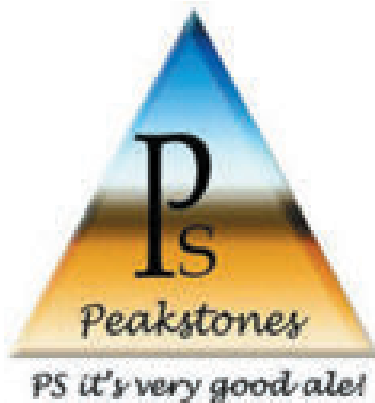
James said “We are thrilled to pick up pub of the season for Autumn. Our pub does feel very seasonal and Autumn and Winter is really when it comes into its own. We have two log burners, books and dark ales!”

The Bull's Head has a very popular function room which opened in September. In this versatile room gigs are held regularly, a banquet table can hold up to 40 guests, and you'll find yoga classes, cinema nights, theatre productions to name but a few.

The food at the Bull's Head is proving a winner with locals and visitors alike, with plenty of winter warmers like Calves Liver, Lamb Shanks, Bangers & Mash, and Belly Pork to go alongside their usual offerings.

James is very proud of the range of beers that are on sale at the award winning pub: “We are still a Timothy Taylor Champions Club pub and Landlord and Boltmaker are permanent fixtures on the bar alongside our own copper ale ‘Baby Faced Nelson’ which we brewed with Falstaff Brewery of Derby. Stouts are also going great guns, Shadow Play from Pentrich & Church End's Stout Coffin have been very well received.”

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Sales enquiries: David Edwards Tel: 07891 350908

Email: dedwards@peakstonesrock.co.uk

WWW.PEAKSTONESROCK.CO.UK

Pottering around the Potteries

'TIS THE SEASON TO PRESENT AWARDS

The 38th Stoke Beer & Cider Festival took place from 8th—10th November in the brand new venue of Spode China Halls on Kingsway in Stoke, not so very far away from its birthplace of the Kings Hall. When a beer festival moves a few miles down the road lock, stock and over one hundred barrels, changes are inevitable; one thing that did not change, however, was that 3 o'clock on the Saturday afternoon was given over to the annual presentation of the CAMRA Potteries Pub of the Year awards.

A full list, including all the results for the Staffordshire Moorlands, can be found in the winter edition of *Potter's Bar*; these are the results for the City of Stoke & the Borough of Newcastle.



We are the champions: the Hopinn

TOP THREE:

Hopinn, Newcastle

Third time at the top for the pub at the top of 'castle; first winning in 2015, they missed out the next year but regained top spot in 2017. Martyn & Ginny Ford hit on a winning formula almost from the start: a traditional pub with modern ales. Why change?

Holy Inadequate, Etruria

The Holy first entered the race in 2012 and has been in the top two ever since. The only thing that has changed recently is the addition of the onsite brewery; Paul & Sarah Cope continue the fight for real ale, ably assisted by Mark and Tonk.

Bull's Head, Burslem

Although the Bulls Head has rarely been outside the Top Ten under the command of Bob, it entered the Top Three last year and maintains its position in 2018. Officially the best tied house in the Potteries; carry on, Bob & Jim & all the rest of the Titanic Crew.

MERITS:

Bridge Street Ale House, Newcastle

Cask Bar, Newcastle

First time in the Top 10 for this lovely little pub at the top of Newcastle, ably run by Jason Griffiths, ex of Burslem. Not only the ale is delicious, but the food is too!

Congress, Longton

Gresley Arms, Alsagers Bank

Greyhound, Hartshill

A return to the Top Ten after seven years for The Greyhound in Hartshill, even though most people would consider it to be the Top of Castle. Congratulations to Mike & the rest of the Titanic Crew.

Hopwater Cellar, Newcastle

Also first time in the Top Ten for Craig & Hayley Armstrong's venue in Newcastle, very much *More Than Just a Bottle Shop*.

Wellers, Newcastle.



Top of the tree: Bridge Street Ale House

CIDER PUB

Bridge Street Ale House, Newcastle

Back at the top of the Cider Tree after a couple of years at Number 2, it's safe to say that Grum was a very Happy Man. And Billie & Lee, of course. Except Billie isn't a man. She was no doubt still happy, though.

Bull's Head, Burslem Swan, Bignall End

CITY CLUB

Porthill Park Cricket Club, Wolstanton

BARRY UNDERWOOD AWARD FOR SERVICES TO REAL ALE

Shaun & Samantha Russell of the Congress Inn, Longton.

So, if you find yourself at a loose end this winter, you could do a lot worse than head to one (or more) of the above pubs 'n' clubs. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all our readers in the arid lands to the south of Trentham!

Martin Perry, Editor of *Potters Bar*

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR 2018: THE FOUNTAIN INN, LEEK

However, the Staffordshire Moorlands cannot be ignored completely...

In early Autumn, just after the final deadline for the last *Potters Bar*, the news broke that the **Fountain Inn**, that humble Caldmore Taverns pub in Leek, had won the West Midlands Regional competition. Unfortunately, it did not then go on to progress into the Top Four, but even so, there was much jubilation, merriment and frivolities on Fountain Street upon the evening of the presentation. This merriment is captured in our great picture with some locals including the Town Crier outside the Fountain. Regional Director Gary Timmins is seen in blue presenting landlord Mark Turner (in red) with the trophy plus Area Organiser Phil Vickers holding the certificate. Congratulations to Mark & all the staff at the Fountain!



Best in the West (Mids): the Fountain

Get more news from the CAMRA Potteries branch including the latest issue of *Potters Bar* at www.camrapotteries.co.uk

THE GREYHOUND

CAMRA branch Pub of the Season Autumn 2018



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12noon – 11pm Sun



The Greyhound

County Road, Stafford ST16 2PU Tel: 01785 222432

Contact Us

Heart of Staffordshire branch

Branch officers elected at the AGM on 5th June:

Branch contact (temporary): **Frank Bryden**

contact@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Tel: 07878 704770

Chair: **Frank Bryden**

chair@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Treasurer: **Dave Tomkinson**

treasurer@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Membership Secretary: **Kelly Porter**

membership@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Beer at Heart Editor: **Andrew Murray**

editor@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Tel: 07814 864 311

Webmaster: **Martin White**

webmaster@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Clubs Officer: **Paul Dykta**

clubs@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

Pubs Officer: **Frank Bryden**

pubsofficer@heartofstaffordshirecamra.org.uk

The following positions are all vacant:

Secretary

Social Secretary

Social Media

Cider Officer

Publicity Officer

Public Affairs Officer

Young Members Officer

If you're interested in taking on a role, or joining the committee in a general capacity, please contact Frank Bryden, Branch Chair, or Andy Murray, Beer at Heart Editor.

Uttoxeter & District sub-branch

Branch contact & Chair: **Simon Ardron**

Email: chair@utttoxetercamra.org

Website: www.utttoxetercamra.org

Contacting You

We endeavour to contact all our members regularly 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 is published in PDF on the branch website but if you would like to take out a postal subscription for £4 per year (to cover costs) please contact the Editor.

Find us on Facebook:

**Heart of Staffordshire CAMRA
Uttoxeter & District CAMRA**

Thank You:

Tom Abbott, Frank Bryden, Neil Butler, Paul Dykta, Martin Perry, Martin Salt, Dave Tomkinson, Phil Vickers, Warwick Printing and all our advertisers.

Articles, letters and suggestions for the next issue gratefully received by the Editor. The next issue of **Beer at Heart** will appear in March 2019.

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

Our Lost Pubs: 2008

Our slightly depressing series continues!

Rifle Volunteer Arms, Common Road, Stafford. House conversion. The Rifle Volunteer was a Victorian pub close to Stafford's other railway station (Stafford Common, closed 1939), and its two Parkers of Burslem front windows were a reminder of its ownership in the 1930s. It was known, and then actually abbreviated to, the **Rifleman** and through the 1970s, like most local Allied Breweries pubs, its Ansell's Mild and Bitter were both keg.



Shepherds Buses, Marston Rd, Stafford. Initially converted to a beauty salon, now residential. One of many Bass Charrington pubs in Stafford, the Shepherds Buses had Joules Bitter as the cask beer. It was a typical street corner 'local' but possibly the only one of twenty pubs in 'the North End' to have a "saucy postcard collection"!



Wheatsheaf, Bridge Street, Uttoxeter. Converted into flats. An ancient building with exposed beams, the Wheatsheaf was said to be, shortly after the Second World War, the first Staffordshire pub to have a juke box. Owned by Allied Breweries its beers were keg during the 1970s.



Malt & Hops, Stafford. Converted to Indian restaurant. Originally the **King William IV** this had been the keg-only **Dirty Duck** for most of the 1970s. It became the Malt and Hops early in 1977 opening with seven handpumped beers - Holden's Mild, Bitter and Special, Ruddles Bitter and County, Youngers Scotch Bitter and McEwans Best Scotch. It was dearer than other pubs and the beer could be inconsistent but the Malt and Hops was the first Stafford pub to offer a choice of more than a couple of real ales. In 2004 its location on a traffic island was acknowledged by it being renamed **The Island**.

(Top to bottom:) Rifle Volunteer window; Shepherds Buses, Wheatsheaf

Lost Pubs compiled by Phil Vickers/PM



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I/we wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association these are available at camra.org.uk/memorandum

Signed _____

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