

FREE

The Firkin



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Magazine of CAMRA North Bedfordshire • Vol 44 No 4 Winter 2019-20

Life, the Universe and Everything



Our 42nd Festival!

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LOST BREWERIES BOOK
REVIEWED

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Chairman's Corner

Happy Holidays!
Welcome to the
Winter edition of
the Firkin.

Thank you to everyone who helped to organise and volunteer your time for the Bedford CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival. The event was a success, and we are truly grateful for your time and energy. Another thank you goes to the wonderful people of Bedford who came along and supported the Beer Festival for the 42nd time.

It was wonderful being able to walk around the event and meet so many of you. We had a record number of new CAMRA

members joining this year, so welcome to you guys! CAMRA is an entirely volunteer-led organisation, and we are always looking for people to come and get involved.

As we enter into the winter months we tend to visit our local pubs, congregate in the warmth and welcoming atmosphere. And enjoy a tipple with our loved ones and spread cheer. When you visit the pub, look around you and remember that this wonderful establishment is there all year round. But too many are closing. Use them or lose them – a pub is for life and not just for Christmas!

Dan Veal

Another Nearby Pub in Final Four

Last year, we reported that the Chequers at Little Gransden was one of the four finalists in CAMRA's 2018 National Pub of the Year competition.



Now another pub not far from us is in the final four for the 2019 crown! **The Red Lion** at **Preston**, near **Hitchin**, is in the last four contenders nationally.

CAMRA's Regional Director for East Anglia, Andrea Briers, presented the finalist's award to the Red Lion's licensees, Ray and Jo Lambe, on 24th November, at a very crowded ceremony.

Like last year's winner, the Red Lion is a community-owned pub – it was the first in



Britain. When a village owns its pub, it will support it, the strong business attracts good licensees, who in turn keep good beer.



There is an ever-changing list of beers in this free house, and on the day, the beers shown in the photo were on, including **Jem's** from Great Newsome, and **What do the Numbers Say?** from Cloudwater Brew.

Fytton Rowland



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Did we Find the Answer?



T'Organiser

How did it go?" "It went" "Was it a success?" "How do you define success?" That was a fairly typical succession of questions and answers when I saw friends after the 42nd Bedford CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival. For anything to be rated as successful, you need to first establish criteria

against which to judge it.

There can be a number of reasons for organising a Beer Festival. When it is the latest in a series that has been going on for over four decades the reasons now may be very different from what they were in 1978 – and that is right. Back then it could be difficult to find a cask-conditioned beer, and if you did, the choice was limited. Now most pubs have at least one, and often several real ales. A number also run their own beer festivals when the choice on offer includes beers they don't normally stock.

We tried to have a good selection of beers of different styles in good condition, served at the right temperature, and straight from

the cask rather than through a length of beer line. That is arguably the best way to get the true taste of a beer, just as the brewer intended. We are all different and we have own preferences for style and flavour. Our Festival offered people something other than their usual ale, broadening their experience and hopefully refining their sense of what they like in a beer. By Saturday evening there was a limited choice available, so I think people used that opportunity to try something different, I certainly did.



This year we had cooling for the cider for the first time, not that much cooling was needed that week!

This made for

more refreshing taste to the variety of ciders and perries that were available. With real cider and perry the taste will vary from year to year because of the growing conditions of the fruit. This is where having clear, brief tasting notes on the boxes was a help in making a choice. A couple of them were adorned with a picture of a mouse and a sign for the staff to offer a taster first – because they had a particular flavour that people like or loathe. I discovered that I liked it.

Wine was also available on the Cider Bar and there was a modest demand for that. For those who weren't drinking, or wanted something non-alcoholic for a change, the soft drinks were also popular. Some of us even tried 0% liquor, the technical term for the hot water used in making beer, a cask of which was supplied (not hot!) by the Eagle Brewery, our major sponsors.

Our International Beers bar had to operate without the normal draught lines as these have now been removed, but some was available in five-litre containers, as well as a



Did we Find the Answer? continued

wide selection of bottled beers from various countries. The introduction of a KeyKeg bar mitigated that loss to an extent, through judicious selection of beers available there. Opinions vary on this method of dispense, but a lot of education about it was available at the bar. Because no air or other gas comes into contact with the beer it remains fresher longer, which is more important in a pub than at a Festival which lasts only a few days. If it has not been pasteurised or filtered it still counts as real ale, though a number of us would prefer it not be served so perishing cold, 5°C.



That was one of our major innovations this year. The other affected all our customers. We changed from taking cash at the bars to having strike-off tokens which could be bought at various places at the event.

While I heard some complaints about this, there were others that welcomed it. Sheets of tokens could be bought with cash or by using a card machine. It seemed to make service at the bar smoother as the serving and paying process was quicker. My first job at the Festival having been working on the bar I can certainly see advantages.

Before people went home they could either cash in their unused tokens or donate them to our charity, the Bedford Lions. Our generous patrons gave £423.50 in this way to benefit the causes they support. They received a further £592.06 from those who used the cloakroom facility they staffed making a total of £1,015.56 for good causes thanks to people's generosity. This helped to boost the funds they now have available for good causes.



The Everpresent

We are also grateful to the sponsors who helped with the costs of this Festival and to the volunteers who spent many hours preparing for it, putting it together, working during the week (some of them behind the scenes) and then taking it all down again. My approach to organising was to be a kind of conductor, co-ordinating the efforts of individuals using their own skills and experience. It was amazing to see the hall develop from a bare floor to a functioning Festival and then back again to a bare floor again on the final Sunday.

Getting back to the question of whether it was a success – we neither ran out of beer, nor were we swimming in too much left over. People seemed to enjoy themselves and, as far as I know, there were no injuries at the Festival. The numbers are still being crunched to see how much beer was left, but from my perspective the week went well.

Did we find the answer? As I write we still have to meet to review what went well and where there are areas we could improve on. There are certainly a number of those. You are never going to get the balance perfectly right, especially when you have made significant changes from previous Festivals. We will look at these as learning experiences.

Will there be another Festival next year? That decision will be made after our final meeting looking back at this Festival. Some people are already talking about it, but the decision is made year by year. All I can say now is that initial enquiries are being made, without commitment. Some of us will put a lot of effort into making sure it happens.

Roger Stokes
Festival Organiser



Winter Beer Festivals

Bah Humbug Not Christmas BeerFest

11-15 December at Old Transporter Ale House, Henlow Camp SG16 6DP. Seasonal festival at Bedfordshire's oldest micropub, featuring 9 stouts, porters and dark brown ales, in addition to the regular beers and ciders.

theoldtransporter.co.uk

Elysian Winter Beer Festival

16-18 Jan at The Maltings, Ship Lane, Ely CB7 4BB. Over 80 real ales and about 20 ciders and perries. Entry £2, CAMRA members free.

elycamrabeerfest.com

Colchester Winter Beer Festival

29 Jan to 1 Feb at Colchester Arts Centre, Church Street CO1 1NF. About 100 real ales and 30 ciders, draught and bottled Belgian beers and local English wines. Entry £3 after 3pm, CAMRA members free.

colchestercamra.org.uk

Derby CAMRA Winter Festival

19-22 Feb at Roundhouse, Derby, close to rail stn. Over 300 real ales, cider and perry, mead and world beers. Rail connection from Bedford. derbycamra.org.uk

Great British Beer Festival Winter

4-8 Feb at New Bingley Hall, Birmingham B18 5PP. Huge range of winter ales, strong milds, strong old ales, stouts and porters, world beers, cider, perry and spirits. Tutored tasting and live entertainment. Buy tickets online.

winter.gbbf.org.uk

Stevenage Beer Festival

20-22 February at Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre, Lytton Way, SG1 1LZ. 80 real ales plus ciders and international beers. Food available all sessions. camranorthherts.org.uk

Chappel Winter Beer Festival

28-29 Feb at East Anglian Railway Museum, Chappel & Wakes Colne Station, Essex CO6 2DS. chappelbeerfestival.org.uk

St Neots "Booze on the Ouse" Beer & Cider Festival

12-14 Mar at Priory Centre, Priory Lane PE19 6HB. About 70 real ales, 16 ciders, world beers and wines. X5 bus from Bedford 5 min.

hunts.camra.org.uk

Blue headers are non-CAMRA events.

The Firkin

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*Stewart and Louise
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Pub News

Bedford Arms, Oakley

Welcome to Marek Obler and Emil Beian, who took over this large village inn during the summer. A new food menu offers creative British dishes prepared with locally sourced ingredients where possible. There is a choice of roast on Sunday. Eagle IPA, Courage Directors and a guest beer are available. Book for meals beforehand by phone or online. 01234 822280, bedfordarmsoakley.com

Bedford Arms, Souldrop

Welcome to Stewart Allister & Louise Shepherd, who now run this popular village pub, a 17th century hop and ale house. The restaurant has a central open fireplace and offers traditional pub favourites with daily specials and a roast on Sunday. Black Sheep Best Bitter, Greene King IPA, Sharp's Doom Bar and two guest beers are available. Closed Mondays. 01234 781384.

Wellington Arms, Bedford



Little has changed at this iconic real ale pub but Liz Sutton has succeeded Lesley Griffin as manager. A changing selection of 12 real ales and, two real ciders and a range of world beers (draught and bottled) are served. 01234 308033

Three Cups, Bedford

Familiar face Bobby from the Wellington Arms has moved across town to manage

this award-winning pub, still leased by White Park brewery. Greene King IPA and Old Speckled Hen are served, with five guest beers, often from local microbreweries, plus a real cider. Tasting thirds are available. 01234 352153.

Bear, Bedford

Welcome to new leaseholder Stuart Turtill,



at this traditional town centre pub. Former manager Hannah has also returned. The Bear moves

closer to the alternative scene in the evenings with regular live music. Marston's EPA (under the house name Big Cat Ale), Wychwood Hobgoblin and two guest beers are available, together with Westons Rosie's Pig cider. 01234 630235 or Facebook [@TheBearinBedford](https://www.facebook.com/TheBearinBedford).

Three Fyshes, Turvey

Welcome to Chris and his team who took over this old riverside inn a few months ago. Traditional pub meals are served in the restaurant, with bar snacks available too. The attractive courtyard garden overlooking the river is available for food and drink in fine weather. Three changing real ales are available. 01234 881463.

threefyshes.co.uk

Fordham Arms, Sharnbrook

The restaurant at this former railway inn now operates separately as **The Spice Tree**, offering a range of Asian dishes to eat in or take away. A separate entrance has been opened to the old public bar, which offers real ales: Greene King IPA, Sharp's Doom Bar and a guest beer were available on our last visit. 01234 781416.

Old Favourites, New Faces

Our September Pub Assessment Trip visited a number of pubs that have gained new licensees recently, to see how their new custodians were getting on. Our minibus started as usual from the **Wellington Arms** in Wellington Street, **Bedford**, with new manager Liz (see page 9).



Our first stop was the **Horse and Groom** in **Clapham**, to which the Burgoses,

licensees of the Five Bells at Cople have moved. The previous tenants at the Horse and Groom had taken it 'gastro' but the Burgoses have turned it back again, with pub grub. It's a listed building but the décor inside is in varying styles. Formerly Greene King, now a free house, but it still stocks GK IPA and Abbot. The third real ale was Young's Bitter.



Oakley

A short drive took us to the **Bedford Arms** at **Oakley**, a traditional village pub now doing extensive

food. Still a Wells house, badged as a 'Casual Dining Pub', the handpumps carried Eagle, Directors and Adnams Ghost Ship. It's been a pub since 1900 but the building is much older. Under the new licensees, Marek and Emil, from the Birch at Woburn, there is improvement in the cellar work.

Then on to another **Bedford Arms**, the one at **Souldrop**. Licensee Fred, who took the beer there to a high standard, has finally

retired. No change in its practice of stocking unusual and interesting cask ales. Doom Bar, Black Sheep Best and GK IPA were accompanied by What the Fox's Hat from the Church End Brewery and Parkway Brewery's Mumbo Jumbo. These both ran out, and were replaced by two more from Parkway, Ruffled Feathers and their Rugby World Cup Special, Pack. That was a good effort, but the new regime hasn't quite reach Fred's level of cellar skill yet.



The **Cock** at **Pavenham** next, where John O'Grady had brought the beer up quite a way before he left. The new licensee seemed to have carried on where John left off, and had London Pride, Wainwright and Brakspear's Gravity on his handpumps. The pub was well patronised,

a good sign, with the Northants skittles table in noisy use.

Finally we travelled to the village of two Threes, **Turvey**. The **Three Cranes**, a Victorian style pub with bedroom accommodation, had a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere. However, a manager was in charge, and a sign outside said that the freehold was for sale.

The **Three Fyshes**, a few yards away, is a much older pub that has sat alongside the main Bedford to Northampton road for centuries. It had Black Sheep Best, Truman's Swift and Sandford's Scrumpy Cider on handpumps. The new licensee was pleased to welcome a CAMRA visit, and keen to point out that the Fyshes is back to being a dining pub again. The two Turvey pubs seem to take it in turns to encounter vicissitudes. I do hope that one day they can settle down and both prosper in friendly rivalry!

Fytton Rowland

Blackened Sun as a Reward



Blackened Sun Brewing Company is a craft microbrewery in Milton Keynes. It has taken four years and sixty-five brewing recipes to forge Blackened Sun. They are about creativity, skill and precision. They use only the best ingredients crammed full of flavour. Blackened Sun do not filter or pasteurise their beer, so all of it is real by CAMRA's definition. It is left to mature and condition naturally which creates a fuller, more diverse flavour. Their beers contain no additives or chemicals and most are suitable for vegans. Their tap room and bottle shop at 3 Heathfield, Stacey Bushes, Milton Keynes MK12 6HP, opens on Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m., on Saturdays from noon to 10 p.m., and on Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Like most craft breweries, they supply their beers in bottles and KeyKegs. Their website at blackenedsunbrewing.co.uk lists a number of other pubs and off-licences that regularly stock their beers; sadly, none in North Bedfordshire yet.

To thank our hard-working festival volunteers, our thank-you trip after the 42nd Bedford CAMRA Beer and Cider



Festival returned to Blackened Sun. On our Summer Day Out, members enjoyed their visit, so we thought it would be a good idea to let more members try their beers. Blackened Sun's Lumiere (4.6% abv), a Belgian-style pale ale, and Neon Lights (4.8% abv), an oatmeal milk stout, had also been enjoyed on the KeyKeg bar at the festival.

Gary Morse and Sharon provided us with a good buffet to partner our drinks, and Gary explained his brewing style and all about yeast blending. This brewery clearly steers clear of the conventional and looks to the craft beer market, where innovation is welcomed and beer styles originating abroad are often produced.



As in June, we had six beers available to try, and most of us worked our way through them in thirds before returning to any favourites. Among them were Luna, a dark saison at 5.2% abv, and Awakening, an IPA at 5.7% abv, which are both among their regulars. They also brew a wide range of seasonal and occasional beers, with an emphasis on dark beers and saisons rather than more mainstream types of beer. I still find their dark beers the most interesting, particularly Luna.

In October the brewery was rather colder than in June, and some found the beers a little too cold too. KeyKeg beers are generally passed through a chiller. But a great night was had by all.

Gary Mudd



Winner of CAMRA North Herts Pub Of The Year 2012, 2017, 2018, 2019

Winner of CAMRA Herts Pub Of The Year 2019

Winner of CAMRA East Anglian Pub Of The Year 2019

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Pasteur's Revenge Beer



Louis Pasteur worked in many fields, including crystallography, silkworm diseases, anthrax, cholera and fermentation. He published memoirs about lactic fermentation (1857) and life without oxygen (1861). His researches showed that fermentation, for vinegar, beer or wine, and diseases thereof, was effected by specific living organisms and not by chemical action. This work, published 1866-1868, was the scientific basis of the process, later named pasteurisation, of brief heating to 55°C to destroy infections.

In 1871, France suffered a humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian war. Pasteur's home town Arbois was occupied by the Prussians. Pasteur sought revenge by so improving French beer that it would drive German beer out of the market. He devised a process which avoided air and infections.

He applied for a patent in June 1871 specifying that beer brewed by the new method should in France be called Bières de la Revanche Nationale and abroad Bières Françaises. His campaign was only

partly successful. Imports of German beer slowly declined, but the Germans responded by installing well-equipped laboratories in their breweries.

In September 1871 he travelled to London, visiting Whitbread's brewery in Chiswell Street. Here he used a microscope to investigate major beer quality problems, which he showed to be due to use of infected yeast. The brewery directors accepted all his advice, promptly bought a microscope and established a control laboratory.

Pasteur returned to Paris and was glad to find that the Prussians had left. He continued his experiments in the pilot brewery at the École Normale and worked at the Tourtel brothers brewery near Nancy in 1873-75. His principal publication, *Études sur la Bière*, appeared in 1876.

In 1884 Pasteur attended Edinburgh University's tercentenary celebrations as a representative of the Académie des Sciences. He visited the Abbey and Holyrood breweries, and spent a long time in Younger's laboratory with a microscope, giving opinions on certain aspects of the brewing process. The University awarded him an honorary degree and, as he stepped up to the platform, he was cheered by the 5,000 people present.

Pasteur died in 1895. The centenary was celebrated at Whitbread's. Two beers were brewed for the occasion – a limited edition of 100 bottles of Louis Pasteur Ale (shown) and one named Bière de la Revanche Nationale, in honour of Pasteur's original intention.

David Maule

[This account is based on an article by N.B. Redman, published in *The Brewer*, September 1995]

Young CAMRA Members' Brewing Day



Hopefully you visited our Bedford CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival this year, if you did, you may have seen and enjoyed a beer called Guavatas. This beer was brewed by young members of CAMRA alongside the brewers of the Brewhouse and Kitchen, Bedford.

Seventeen young CAMRA members from across East Anglia arrived early on 24th August to join Richard and Caitlin for an exciting day of brewing. After a discussion about the process of brewing we rolled up our sleeves and got to work.

For those unaware of how beer is made, here is a brief guide.

Step 1. Heat up water (liquor) to a temperature of around 67°C.

Step 2. Put the grains, mostly barley malt, (mash), into the mash tun and pour in the water.

Step 3. Stir the mixture like a big bowl of porridge.

Step 4. Leave for around an hour for the hot liquor to allow the mash to release sugars. This sugary water is called wort.

Step 5. Raise the temperature to around 75°C to stop the processes in the mash. This is called Mash Out.

Step 6. Put the wort into the kettle and run hot liquor through the mash (sparging).

Step 7. Boil the wort for about an hour, during this step add hops and finings. Hops added during the boil are for flavour.

Step 8. Add hops for aroma and allow the wort to cool to around 20°C, and take the Original Gravity (O.G., measuring alcohol content) reading.

Step 9. Put the wort into the fermenter, pitch the yeast and leave for at least a week.

Step 10. After fermentation take a new O.G. reading, Then put into casks or kegs to condition.

During the day we enjoyed some of the excellent beer available at Brewhouse and Kitchen, enjoying both their cask and keg beers that are brewed in-house. We made the decision that the beer would contain guava and discussed names for the beer, Guavatas was selected. Caitlin and Richard spent time explaining the brewing process

Young CAMRA Members' Brewing Day



the beer an enjoyable sweetness with fruit notes.

We enjoyed our brewing day immensely and ended the day with a brief tour of some of great pubs Bedford has to offer. As a team we were able to form friendships and bond throughout

to us as well as talking about the difference in hops and why they were added at different points during the boil.

A couple of weeks after the brewing day, Richard added guava into the casks and kegs as the beer was transferred. This gave

the day. CAMRA often host events like this for its members and volunteers. If you wish to be involved in something like this, join CAMRA today!

Dan Veal

Branch Diary

CAMRA North Beds Branch business meetings are normally held on the second Thursday of alternate months. Social events are held on the third Thursday of each month.

Guests are welcome at social events, but members have priority on brewery visits. For latest information visit the branch website at northbeds.camra.org.uk.

Unless otherwise stated, for all events further details can be obtained from, and bookings made with, Gary Mudd on 01234 741871 or e-mail socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk.

JANUARY

Thursday 9th – Branch Meeting

Business meeting at Bedford Rowing Club, Duckmill Lane, Bedford, at 8 p.m. CAMRA members only.

Thursday 16th – Pub Assessment trip

Minibus tour starting at the Wellington Arms, Wellington Street, Bedford, at 7.00 p.m.

Thursday 23rd – Pub Assessment trip

Walking tour in Bedford, starting at 7 p.m. Starting point to be announced.

Thursday 30th – Pub Assessment trip

Minibus tour starting at the Wellington Arms, Wellington Street, Bedford, at 7.00 p.m.

FEBRUARY

Thursday 6th – Branch Meeting

Business meeting at Bedford Rowing Club, Duckmill Lane, Bedford, at 8 p.m. CAMRA members only.

MARCH

Thursday 12th – Branch Meeting

Business meeting at Bedford Rowing Club, Duckmill Lane, Bedford, at 8 p.m. CAMRA members only.

Friday 13th – Branch Visit to St Neots Beer Festival – travel by X5 bus, details to be announced.

Monday 23rd – Branch Annual General Meeting (Provisional date.) CAMRA members only. Venue to be announced.

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South by Southeast in November

A strange minibus trip in November – no Roger Stokes, no Mike Benyon, and no Helen and Gary Mudd. We



headed first to the **Anchor** at **Great Barford**, a warm Wells house alongside the historic Barford Bridge. They

had the current Wandering Brewer beer – Wayfarer Green Hop Ale (3.7% abv) – on offer, alongside Eagle, Adnams Ghost Ship and Weston's Rosie's Pig cider on handpumps. Most of us tried the Wayfarer and found it in good condition. At 7.30 p.m. the pub was fairly full, not only with diners.



We next visited the **Five Bells** at **Cople**, where a sign announced that the new tenants had celebrated

their arrival with a party the previous Friday. There were some rearrangements of the furniture, including moving the sofas in front of the open fire – welcome! We were told by the friendly landlady that the beer lines had been replaced that day, and indeed the Greene King IPA was in excellent condition. The second handpump will normally be in use.

A rather roundabout journey ensued to our next stop – Gary usually plans the routes, and was sorely missed! We finally reached the **White Horse** at



White Horse

Southill, where there were plenty of customers, many of them just finishing meals at 9 p.m. The old village pub has been extended into an eatery, but still has three handpumps. Unfortunately the Purity Gold had reached “end-of-barrel”, but Timothy Taylor's Landlord and Fuller's London Pride were available, and the Landlord was in acceptable condition.

No changes at the **Stone Jug** at **Clophill**, an old greensand building, and indeed none are expected as the same family has run it for decades. Although drinking pubs in villages are now a rarity, the Stone Jug was crowded. Their regular ale is Otter Amber, and on this occasion it was joined by Shepherd Neame Spitfire, Harwich Town Brewery's Ganges (an amber bitter at 4.0% abv), Pitchfork Brewery's East Street Cream (a dark 5.0% abv beer) which appealed to Bruce Springsteen fans, and Gun Dog Brewery's winter beer, Chilly Dog (4.0% abv) which sadly ran out before I could get my half-pint of it. I settled for the Ganges, which turned out to be fairly nondescript.



Last stop was the **Greyhound** at **Haynes**, a pub with a substantial dining trade. Not all diners, though – as the only pub in a large village,

it was busy with drinkers at 10 p.m., and we were warmly welcomed and efficiently served. My eye lighted on an Oakham Citra pumpclip, but sadly it wasn't ready yet! The Mad Squirrel Brewery's Mister Squirrel, by contrast, had finished, so we were left with the choice of GK IPA and Tring Side Pocket for a Toad. I ordered the Side Pocket and didn't regret it – its condition was good.

It was now so late that the **Bell** at **Cotton End** was in darkness when we drove past it. So that concluded the proceedings.

Fytton Rowland

The Names of Beers – Bedford Edition

This is the beginning of a series where I research (and use your advice from our social media pages) into beers named after certain themes. I shall try to find beers currently in production; however, this may not always be the case. In this issue we start close to home with beers that hold names relevant to Bedford.

Eagle IPA – Eagle Brewery



Originally produced by Charles Wells, since the sale of the brewery it is now produced by Marston's. Since the 15th Century, an Eagle has been used on the coat of arms of Bedford. This led to

Wells naming their iconic IPA after Bedford's Eagle, a local beer for local people.

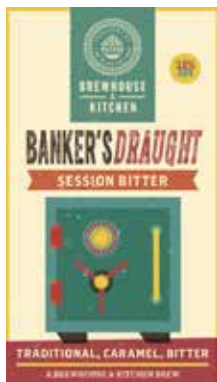
Bedford Best – White Park Brewery



Due to the relocation of the brewery this beer is currently out of production.

How the name of this beer links to Bedford is fairly obvious – though it was brewed in Cranfield!

Banker's Draught – Brewhouse & Kitchen Bedford



Brewhouse & Kitchen is a microbrewery within a pub, of which we are lucky to have a branch in Bedford High Street, naming beers after Bedford. (They list their beers and information behind the names on their website.)

The name of this beer derives from the name of the Wetherspoons

pub that formerly occupied the premises. Wetherspoons chose the name Banker's Draught for their premises due to Midland Bank being the previous tenants of the building.

Bedfordshire Clanger – Banks & Taylor



Banks & Taylor are based in Shefford and have many beers named after Shefford; however, Bedfordshire Clanger is the closest to "Bedford".

Bedfordshire Clanger is named after the food, which is a pasty that has meat at one end and fruit the other (not a pink alien that lives on the moon). "Clanger" itself derives from the term "clung", meaning "heavy" in relation to food, which was noted by linguist Joseph Wright. (For a full history of the pasty visit the Gunns Bakery website.)

Bedfordbier – Bierbrouwerij De Roos



Bierbrouwerij De Roos is a Brewery in the Netherlands, and it may seem odd that they have an IPA named after Bedford.

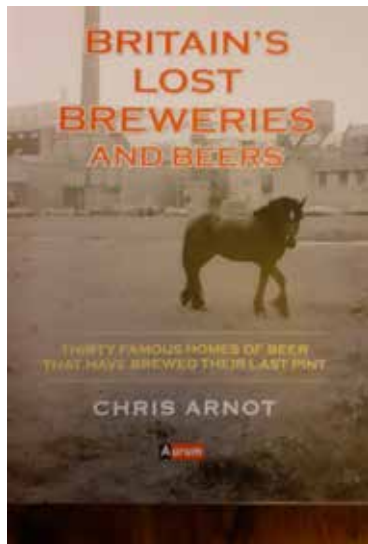
They actually named this beer

after the Bedford Truck they are raising funds to restore to its former glory. Bedford Vehicles were named after our town by General Motors.

Are you aware of any other beers named after Bedford? Let us know on social media, or via the editor of the Firkin.

Dan Veal

Raise a Glass to Absent Friends



A friend has given me a coffee-table book called *Britain's Lost Breweries and Beers* by Chris Arnot, published by Aurum Press. Arnot was a local journalist – now an

endangered species – and his career took him all around the country. As a real ale fan, he naturally drank the local brews.

Each city or large town had a local brewery – or at most two or three – which owned all the pubs, and each pub sold only its owner's beers. These included a bitter and a mild, but not many more choices. Most of these breweries have gone. Chris Arnot has researched what happened to thirty of them in detail, and interviewed former employees of each. He can remember what their beers tasted like, too.

I can remember several of them myself. My first legal pint at 18 was Tamplin's Bitter. Tamplin's of Brighton suffered a takeover by Watney's in 1953 but continued to brew until 1973 – by which time I'd moved several times, and was living in Nottingham, where there were three breweries, two of which Arnot includes. Shipstones was the favourite of local people, just as Eagle is in Bedford. "Shippos" got taken over in 1978 by Greenall Whitley but brewed on until 1990. I lived across the street from their maltings, now converted into flats.

My Nottingham beer of choice was the

other one covered, Hardy's and Hanson's Kimberley Brewery. Its owners sold out to Greene King in June 2006, and just six months later GK closed the brewery. I haven't forgiven them – I refuse to drink the sham H&H beers sold in GK pubs.

My parents moved to Kent, so in university vacations I came to like Fremlin's – another of Arnot's subjects. They perished to Whitbread's in 1967.

Another lost brewery is Young's of Wandsworth. John Young signed an agreement in 2006 with Paul Wells, which led to the Havelock Street brewery in Bedford becoming Wells and Young's – Young's owned 40% of it. When John Young died soon afterwards, the new management decided to get out of brewing altogether. They sold their share back to Wells, and then contracted with Wells to produce Young's beers. Then Wells sold the brewery to Marston's, who now brew Young's there.

The rest of the lost breweries Chris Arnot covers are less familiar to me, and their stories are quite variable. Some lost out to the Big Six – Bass, Allied Breweries, Watney's, Whitbread's, Courage, and Scottish and Newcastle – in the 1970s.

A few themes emerge. Owing families fall out, some of them wanting to take the money and run. Companies become plcs and a big boy takes a minority share – initially. Finance-oriented managements eye up valuable brewery sites. Predators themselves become prey, internationally. So now we have the international big four of Carlsberg, Heineken, Molson Coors, and the biggest of the lot, AB InBev.

As a portrait of the 1960s and 1970s Big Six era, researched in detail and described with humour, I can thoroughly recommend *Britain's Lost Breweries*.

Fytton Rowland



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