

**FREE**

# The Firkin



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

Magazine of CAMRA North Bedfordshire • Vol 47 No 3 Autumn 2023

## For the 45th Time...



Bedford Beer and Cider Festival, 4th-7th October

**EDITORIAL**

**BREWPOINT LAUNCHES NEW RANGE**

**BEDFORD BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL TIME AGAIN**

**NORTHANTS CAMRA VISITS US**

**WHAT WE DID IN OUR HOLIDAYS**

**BRANCH DIARY**

**BRANCH DIRECTORY**

The Campaign for Real Ale is a consumer organisation founded in 1971

# THE DEVONSHIRE ARMS

*Serving Real Draught  
Cider and Fine Wines*

*A local community pub  
in the Castle Road area  
of Bedford with a warm  
welcome and friendly  
atmosphere.*



*Lovely courtyard garden  
and free Wi-Fi*

*Serving a range of Quality  
Cask Ales — Eagle IPA,  
Adnams Ghost Ship,  
Courage Directors and  
range of three guest ales.*

**CAMRA North Beds Pub of the Year 2013, 2020 & 2021  
CAMRA North Beds Town Pub of the Year 2022  
Cider Pub of the Year 2018, Town Pub of the Year 2019**

For forthcoming events please view website

[www.devonshirearmsbedford.co.uk](http://www.devonshirearmsbedford.co.uk)

32 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3TB

Tel: 01234 301170

## The Fox at Carlton



### North Beds CAMRA Pub of the Year 2022

North Beds CAMRA Country Pub of the Year 2016, 2017, 2020 & 2021

**Eagle and Timothy Taylor's Landlord permanent ales,  
2 guest ales changing every 3-4 days. Home cooked food  
Tuesday-Sunday lunchtimes and Tuesday-Saturday evenings.  
Live music every month – check Facebook for details.**

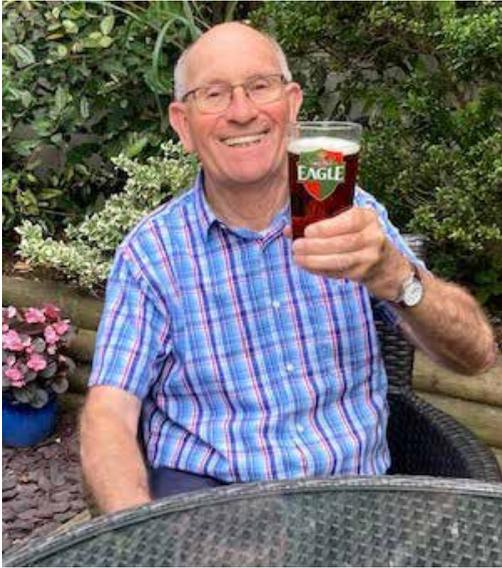
01234 720235



[thefoxatcarlton](https://www.facebook.com/thefoxatcarlton)

[www.thefoxatcarlton.pub](http://www.thefoxatcarlton.pub)

# Editorial



**F**irst, an apology. The cover photo on the Summer 2023 issue of the Firkin showed the Anchor pub in Bedford boarded up, as an example of pubs closing. Unfortunately for me, but not for the Anchor, a couple of weeks after I'd sent the photo off to the printers as part of the copy of the Summer Firkin, I passed the Anchor again and saw that it was no longer boarded up and had reopened!

I apologise profusely to the licensee, staff and customers of the Anchor, Cardington Road, for giving the impression that the pub was closed. It is very much alive – so go along there for a pint!

While I'm apologising, a second apology. For boring technical reasons (I've mislaid my camera, in other words, and haven't had time to buy a new one), this issue is a bit short on photos. I've therefore held over a report on a North Beds CAMRA pub trip in August to the Winter Firkin so that it can be adequately illustrated.

On page 10, you will find a Word Search puzzle, the second one produced by our friends the Lilleys. This time the hidden

words are all the names of hop varieties, a very appropriate topic for real-ale fans. If you solve the puzzle and wish to enter for the prize, send your solution to the Editor, the Firkin, either as a photo at [fytton.rowland@gmail.com](mailto:fytton.rowland@gmail.com), or by post to Fytton Rowland, 73 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3TA.

At the time of writing (early August) I had expected to be at the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) at Olympia in London, pulling pints for customers of Bar 15. I intended to write an article for this issue of the Firkin about my experience of working at GBBF – usually my favourite week of the year. Unfortunately I had to pull out of GBBF this year owing to family issues that kept me at home, so that article will have to wait until next year.

I can share a couple of pieces of news from Olympia. On the first day, Tuesday 1st August, at least one pint of Wensleydale Brewery's beer was pulled by the MP for the Wensleydale area of Yorkshire – a gentleman who also happens to be the Prime Minister!

More important (for real-ale drinkers, anyway) was the other piece of news. This year's CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain (CBoB), announced at GBBF, is Elland 1872 Porter, from another Yorkshire brewery. Porter is a very traditional style of English dark beer, perhaps the oldest style of all, that had nearly died out completely before CAMRA came along 51 years ago. Recently, dark beers have been regaining popularity, and we like to think that CAMRA can claim much of the credit for that. Congratulations to the Elland Brewery for brewing the 2023 Champion Beer!

*Fytton Rowland*

# Brewpoint Launches New Range



**B**rewpoint recently signed a contract with the Riverside Tennis Club in Bedford, to sponsor the club in return for the club selling exclusively Brewpoint beers in its bar. In July, the club held an event to open the refurbished bar - now called the Breakpoint Bar - and Brewpoint chose this occasion to launch a new range of bottled and canned beers. I spoke to the Brewpoint reps at the event, and they gave me information about Brewpoint's (that is, Wells's) plans, which were quite surprising to me.

Three new canned beers were launched at the tennis club event: Lodestar, a Pacific Pale Ale at 4.0% abv; Foghorn, a Hazy Session IPA at 4.3% abv; and Supernova, a 4.6% abv Helles Lager. I found all of them very enjoyable beers. The tennis club's barman, Adie, had arranged cans of the



three in an attractive display behind the bar.

But I was told that the range of three cask ales that have been brewed at Brewpoint since it opened (Origin, Legacy and DNA) are being discontinued, and that from now on there will be only one regular cask ale brewed at Brewpoint, to be called Anchorman, a 'fresh modern IPA'. There will also be different seasonal cask ales every two months.

In addition, there will be changes in the keg/bottled/canned range. Two will be discontinued - Checkpoint, replaced by Foghorn, and On Point, replaced by Lodestar. Midpoint, the 5.0% pilsner lager, will in future only be available in the Brewpoint bar itself and not elsewhere - replaced in pubs by Supernova. The remaining range will continue to be available: Two Sheds, formerly Charlie Wells Dry Hopped Lager, 4.7% abv; Wit a Minute, a witbier, 5.0% abv; Inkwell, an oatmeal stout, 5.2% abv; Alpha, a West Coast IPA, 6.7% abv; Hop and Heart, a NE IPA, 6.2% abv; and Nil Point, a low-alcohol beer, 0.5% abv. Nil Point, however, was in short supply at the time of writing in July, because CO<sub>2</sub> was proving hard to source.

*Fytton Rowland*



ORDER  
ONLINE AT  
OUR WEBSHOP

## LEGENDARY BEER FROM HERTFORDSHIRE



### VISIT OUR BREWERY SHOP FOR...

- ▶ DRAUGHT & BOTTLED BEER TO TAKEAWAY
- ▶ LIMITED EDITION BREWS
- ▶ EXPERIMENTAL BREWS
- ▶ GIFT VOUCHERS
- ▶ T-SHIRTS & GOODIES
- ▶ GOLDEN TOAD MEMBERSHIP
- ▶ PICKLES & PRESERVES
- ▶ BREWERY TOURS

In 2022 to celebrate our 30th anniversary our Monthly Specials will be raising funds and awareness for Rennie Grove Hospice Care



**TRING**  
BREWERY Co.

Dunsley Farm, London Road, Tring HP23 6HA

☎ 01442 890721 🌐 [www.tringbrewery.co.uk](http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk)



Help us power



Help keep WhatPub up to date by using the feedback form to let us know about any changes at the pub:

[www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com)



Find the most comprehensive list of real cider and perry in the UK

Is your cider #NotFromConcentrate?



Visit [camra.org.uk/cider](http://camra.org.uk/cider)



# For the 45th time



**G**reetings all, I hope you have had a fantastic summer. As we look forward to the Autumn, we can also look forward to our flagship event, the Bedford Beer and Cider Festival. The festival once again returns to the Bedford Corn Exchange from 4th to 7th October, and this year there are some significant changes. So let me give you a little insight as to what you can expect.

One of the biggest changes you will find this year is the layout. Those of you who have supported us over a number of years will know the peninsula-style bar arrangement we have previously used, effectively cutting the hall in two. This year sees a change, with the bar going along the back wall. But that's smaller, I hear you cry, are we going to fewer beers? Let me allay any fears you have. Although the bar is

physically shorter, instead of our customary dual-level stillaging we will have beer on three levels. This will make no difference to your drinking experience, except that hopefully you will find it more convenient to find what you are looking for. So with the change to our layout, this means considerably more floor space, so we plan to respond to some of the feedback we have received from you, our loyal customers. We will utilise some of our additional space with tables and chairs, to allow you to relax and chat with friends while enjoying your beer or cider. This will also allow the festival to be more inclusive for everyone.

So now let's look at the elephant in the room - the entrance price. Yes, on the surface of it, you will be paying more than in previous years. But let's take a moment to

# It's Beer Festival Time in Bedford!



look at this. We all know the cost of everything has increased, and that's the same for the beer festival. All of the costs we incur to put the event on have gone up.

Q) But why should I the customer be penalised?

A) I'm not going to lie to you, you will be paying a little more, but we are not intending to penalise anyone.

But there's a big price hike, I hear you say.

Well, not really. All we have done is included the cost of your festival glass at the point of entry, instead of paying for it once you're inside. So hopefully this will make it a more streamlined and quicker entry for you by removing a bottleneck, as we are extremely limited on volunteers.

Q) So if I'm coming on multiple days I don't want multiple glasses.

A) Not a problem. You can hand your glass in and get a token, and then when you return with it, you will have the cost of your glass (£4) deducted from your entry price, and you can collect a clean glass for you to use at the festival.

Q) I also don't want to be carrying my glass home every time how are you going to deal with this issue?

A) In the same way - you can hand your glass in, and get a fresh one on your return.

So please don't let this perceived increase deter you from coming, and if you have any more questions about this or anything else regarding the festival please feel free to contact me.

As you can probably imagine, at the time of writing this article (July) it's a little early for us to tell you about most of our beers, as the majority of them will not be ordered until the end of August. The reasons for this are twofold. The first reason - a lot of breweries have not released the list of beers that will be available at the time of our festival, including any special beers they will be brewing, until nearer the time. The second reason is that although we have an extensive wishlist of existing and delicious beers, sometimes a brewer may do their final check on a beer and decide they are not happy to sell it, as it's not up to their incredibly high standards. Something that I'm sure, like me, you can only applaud them for. So when we are selecting the beers, apart from the highest of quality (we do carry out extensive quality control, it's a hard life but somebody has to do it!), we often see if there's an interesting theme or reason why a beer has a particular name. Here is a case in point - we have a beer from Eyam brewery. In the Derbyshire Peak District. Eyam is famous for being the plague village. The village took an incredibly brave decision and locked the gates not allowing anybody in or out during the bubonic plague. So I can announce we will be having three beers from Eyam brewery at this year's event: Riley Gold @ 4.2% abv, All Fall Down @ 6.5% abv, and a hefty Black Death Imperial Stout at a formidable 11% abv. Please note that this, the strongest beer in the festival, will only be available in one-third pint measure.

Another thing that is happening this year is the return of our popular continental beer bar upstairs in the Howard Room. In memory of a good friend and dedicated

# It's Beer Festival Time in Bedford! continued



CAMRA member who regularly volunteered at our festival. We have decided to rename it the Jonathan Kemp Bar. And this time we will be promoting some beers from Bamberg, the town which I'm sure you will be aware Bedford is twinned with. We will be publishing a full list nearer the time on our Facebook page and the branch website, so why not give us a 'like' and be among the first to hear our breaking news on the festival.

For those of you who prefer fruit-based drinks, we will again have our celebrated cider and perry bar. This year Chris our bar manager will predominantly have a selection from Bedfordshire and counties to the east of us, including Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Essex. He is hoping to have some special treats in store for you, including a rum-cask cider and a single-apple variety. There will of course be an excellent range of dry to sweet choices to suite every palate. But should you be unsure just what to pick, just head over to the cider

bar and have a chat with him or one of his team who will gladly help to educate you.

Another option to tantalise your taste buds is Rookery Craft Mead, coming all the way from Perthshire, so not exactly round the corner! Christopher Mullin is a real artisan producer, and Christopher's passion is obvious and shines through in the quality of his mead. I urge you to take some time and have a chat to him about the history of mead and research he has undertaken in order to make a truly traditional product. So if you think 'I wouldn't like mead' or 'oh no, I've tried it before and it's sickly sweet' let me encourage you to explore the Rookery Mead - it's really not what you will expect!

North Bedfordshire branch member Colin Lilley is our resident engraver and also our logo designer. This year's logo features a record player, so what's that got to do with beer? Well it's a link to our 45th festival and 45rpm, and for those of you who know your rock history there's a nod to a classic spooof

documentary. If you know you know!! If you are interested in marking your visit to the festival, Colin can personalise your festival glass or one of his very traditional pewter tankards, the perfect thing to drink your traditional beer from.

This year's food option has also changed and I'm delighted to tell you we have partnered with acclaimed local bakery Gunns, so this time we will be offering a good selection of soft and crusty rolls freshly made daily, and along with these we will have a local delicacy the 'Bedfordshire Clanger'. I have had long conversations with David Gunns and at the time of writing, there is the possibility of him creating a special 'Beer Clanger' just for our festival. So don't miss out on this limited-edition option. We will also have a vegan option available in both the hot and cold choices.

We will have a festival T-shirt or polo shirt available for you to pre-order through our website and Facebook pages, which you can collect from the engraving stand at the festival. But don't worry if you don't get round to pre-ordering your shirt, as you can place an order at the festival and it will be posted to you.

Over the last two years, post-Covid we have not had any entertainment at the festival, as this gave us the opportunity to allow for greater social distancing, but with the changes to our layout this year, we see the return of entertainment by popular demand. So on Friday evening we welcome the Bedford Town Band who will be situated on the balcony. Again we are leaning towards a traditional theme with a 'Last Night of the Proms'. Perfect for a rip-roaring singalong and, to enable you to join in, we are intending to have printed songsheets available. On the Saturday, we are planning to show three, yes three rugby matches, as it's the Rugby World Cup time, and all of the home nations are in action: 14.00 Wales v Georgia, 16.45 England v Samoa, and finishing off at 20.00 with Ireland v Scotland.

But don't worry, if you're not a rugby fan - and we hear that there are one or two non-fans in Bedford - there will be areas available where you will be able to escape. We are also hoping to have Bedford Radio getting involved with us again and are hopefully going to be broadcasting a live show from the festival again this year.

There are a few more bits it's important for me to touch on. As I have already alluded to, we are desperate for volunteers so if you feel that you would like to be involved please drop me a line. There are lots of areas you can help: have a look at the list of areas below.

Bar  
Cider bar  
Glasses  
Stewarding  
Food service  
Office/token sales

We are a real team and we all pull together to make it work.

You may also be aware that HMRC made some changes to the duty that is paid on alcohol on the 1st of August. This means we can no longer provide carry-outs of draught beer, so regrettably if you find a beer you love, you will not be able to take any home to savour or, like I used to do, find a delicious dark beer to marinade my fruit in for my Christmas cake!

I feel I must also draw your attention to the fact that beer lanyards are strictly prohibited at all CAMRA festivals. For those of you who are not aware of what these are, they are a device to place around your neck that holds your beer glass. A brilliant idea you say, but these devices can be extremely dangerous as if you were unlucky enough to trip up - instead of your glass falling away from you it could end up embedding into your face/neck or chest and could cause you serious injury. So for the reasons stated, and our duty of care to you all please be understanding.

*Katherine Lilley*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Hop Types #2

KGVA BLQDB COE OTMOY TREB ILPRIWAKA JGWVEAXD  
SRFGLQGEHLVDEP QHZWKDFALCONERS FLIGHTRJA  
AIANZYBMNCAOKGLLFRWHNHFFMNUOSS QURBXRUC  
LAGGQRLKZGADAQDUSFMT EBLRMEJUMJZEAXDMFE  
TVGX LZUDXEOJMGVAYPDRHAYVSKLAA YJFCOCZIL  
AKZAXEGR AOHGAKL KQDSU UWEKGTJLTT SQOWAWCG  
QGQG XHHSIEGXROFAPBUWGPRLC BYHGTRWHI WPHG  
HBM BANUMI JNIIULRRTGWHMASGRORRORGEUXPHVU  
POZWKDVW IQFJLKBUCWUGLPPASAI INFC LYDWIF  
RSSCEWKLH UHDLRRCERJYMVEPFCL SBI AZDELTEWI  
LXNMYYRTSSRGOKEADJ VWYRAUXSQRALNTXIAUUR  
GXL POLARISMJETOTOFXILDZPEPFHBLHBKMKCHPA  
CFEYAVWEWXSRMZPHSQIWQYJLCONZMXDSOJUNKI  
KEMDQNFWCUXUEKXUNULD VESFEYTMMLLRVBACSI  
JRCHGXKPF SMDBOTUI LLZRPFDKTWLAEMV KVENNZ  
UZFXUAODEUNEQH CNTIRCAAISQEEEBXCJINPKXG  
MGKHS M CUDNORTACENDOUARTANFZUDI GAFUSPPR  
FUCOS E T X EDOQLY OUELLOP MFRTYLNXAVQU THCY  
CSL KABRTIRLTSUBVUT TILLICUMLXMIJIMGKHDY  
JMKCKBMEALPHAROMARPYXIAKDI TYJYZCXVENIM  
TENNOSYMBWLECOBWHARRZRSKAAMJQVTKIACUPC  
VOJVODINARWHWUHAMOZEBWOGDYKLDWDITCFPRLO  
WNOOPCRPQGIC SZUKNVALTZY ZVHSZATLIKGINCM  
JNUELAXPZSAA NC KAZQETASMYOEKJRPOMYWECWQ  
OBRIXXMTRYAEN OYTVKOBIXUNDWYQWRRABLSNAS  
UHVRC AIPCMYTGKKDUCWPANMCLICGDEVEKLSHPASP  
TIKBLESVNTCCTWAIATGKZDBDCRZHLIPOBFHKEV  
EDUSDYZCEFKZLYRGKDHPPHUMEAUJMDNDOWKGSB  
NYTOQPAMD BTEATNKIEJLZRNEAEIAESMGUUDJBP  
IGFEYHAEZL CVSNULD FJIRJNQLNGNAWVHXDLB  
QGS GILNDOLIQJCAPXTADS BALAODURUPCSPVDTN  
UUKALNZAPOTQOJRKSAYEUIMDLAVAXONYIXZRAQ  
AEXIRETSEJALRGTOCDALCEIDOIUURBF LSTQBUR  
PZWYAMXSMZUMEDSLZHLOLI WVNQGFBI GIKHEKRB  
DFVAEFIZMMZ ZREWWVEZOJFDHXGFJJRNRLWTEOZ  
QHQQMJFRBOHGLZSFTANULAGARGGOIOEAQA JVRM  
GSORACHIACEMNUNJKMUXOODZOXLMCNGBATCBAI  
CWMKKEAZCDTPCQQVRFNKXVQGV BKAZBEKMBBYZP

AlphaAroma  
Falconers Flight  
Zappa  
Vojvodina  
Serebrianka  
Outeniqua  
Mandarina  
Helga  
Columbia  
Aurora

Sorachi Ace  
Liberty  
Yakima Gold  
Tillicum  
Riwaka  
Nelson Sauvin  
Kazbek  
Hallertau  
Fuggle  
Atlas

Pacific Jade  
Lubelski  
Yakima Cluster  
Tardif de Bourgogne  
Rakau  
Necatron  
Junga  
Eroica  
California Cluster  
Amarillo

Green Bullet  
Topaz  
Willamette  
Strickelbract  
Polaris  
Medusa  
Huell Melon  
Dr Rudi  
Styrian Bobek

Flyer  
Zythos  
Wakatu  
Strisselspault  
Pilgrim  
Jester  
Hersbrucker  
Columbus  
Boadicea

# Northamptonshire CAMRA Branch Visits Bedford

Our CAMRA neighbours, Northamptonshire CAMRA, paid a visit to Bedford to sample some of our pubs in July. They did so in style. No little minibus for them – fifty of their members came in a heritage double-decker bus, of which one of their branch members is a part-owner.

They started at the Wellington Arms (the Welly), North Beds branch's current Pub of the Year. As I'm currently Chair of the North Beds branch as well as Editor of the Firkin, I welcomed them to Bedford on our branch's behalf. As you can imagine, getting a double-decker bus up Wellington Street would have been a bit of a problem, so they were dropped off



in St Peter's Street and walked up to the Welly. Some of them visited other pubs first as they reckoned that fifty of them would have overfilled the quite small pub. I left them enjoying the range of beers at one of Bedford's best real-ale pubs and went in search of their bus.

I found it: a Leicester City Transport Leyland. There were a couple of members left on board, one of them the driver, who couldn't drink, of course. The group were going to visit – in varying orders – the Welly, the Brewhouse and Kitchen, the Three Cups, the Castle and the Pilgrim's Progress.

Later that afternoon I happened to be at the Rushden Historical Transport Museum, the former Rushden Railway Station (which as you may know has a very fine real-ale bar in the station buffet), to deliver their copies of the Summer issue of the Firkin. And guess what – there was the LCT double decker, parked nearby, and there on the station were the same group of CAMRA members I'd met earlier! They were going to stop at one more pub, the Duke's Head in Burton Latimer, on their way back to Northampton.



# What we did on our Holidays

It may be a strange thing to comprehend, but CAMRA members do have other interests than beer! I direct a choir from all over the country that comes together once a year to sing for a weekend in one of our beautiful Cathedrals. In 2022 it was Chichester, and to make the most of it, Helen and I had a holiday break around the weekend. Of course, any civilised break means visiting a few hostleries on the way, so this is an account of what we found. I would add a caveat that the weather was extreemely hot, and may have adversely affected beer quality with cellar cooling struggling. Also, the pub trade was still slowly coming round from the devastation of Covid, so beer choice was sometimes restricted.

We set off down from Bedford and found ourselves turning on to the A3 around lunchtime. I pulled in to check our route and whereabouts and though we'd try the Black Swan at Ockham.



It's an 18th century building, though much opened out by Greene King, with a large garden. It was very hot, but we found a shady spot outside. The service and food were good but, at first, I got caught by the lovely handpump for 'Silver Cygnet'. This was, of course, GK 'Hardy and Hansons' Kimberley Bitter masquerading as a house beer! That said, it was also in poor condition and proved undrinkable, so I took it back. Luckily their guest beer was Surrey Hills

Brewery's Shere Drop....much, much better! Onward to our base for a few days, The Seal in Selsey.



This is a CAMRA award winner, and the accommodation and restaurant were excellent (and air-conditioned). The bar was down to only two of its usual four handpumps. Dark Star Hophead, the regular ale, was on and in good condition. They also had Exmoor Fox, but it was not in good condition. Let's hope things are back to normal now.

There's also a micropub in Selsey (The Hopp Inn), which we didn't get to try. Beers all racked in a glass cool cabinet. Looks good and seems popular. Whilst there we visited a couple of wildlife areas. Firstly, Pagham Harbour RSPB reserve, where we caught a glimpse of a visiting Squacco Heron. Fainting from the heat, we sought refuge in the Crab & Lobster, a lovely old building with gourmet restaurant and posh accommodation. Luckily, although closed between restaurant services, the bar was open and we slaked our thirst with Amarillo, a single hop pale from Crafty Brewing, Dunsfold, Surrey. Another visit was to Knepp Estate, a beautiful, wild area with roaming pigs and deer and particularly the breeding storks. Half-way round we stopped at the Countryman for lunch. The Countryman is near the lovely village of Shipley, with a windmill (home of Hilaire Belloc and fictionally, Jonathan Creek!). It



keeps two ales, one from Hepworth and one from Harveys. Spotting Sussex PA and Sussex Best on the bar we felt in luck. Unfortunately, neither of the beers was in good condition so we left for the final part of our walk a bit dejected.

The next day we stayed more out of the sun, visiting Petworth House and Gardens where we were served lunch and, later, Ice Creams by Honeysuckle Weeks. Looking for an evening meal we ventured to Pagham.



Firstly, we tried the Inglenook, a Grade 2 listed pub hotel that boasts several listings as local CAMRA PotY. It also has four craft keg beers on. Beer menus are displayed on a screen. We sampled the Dark Star 'Sunquake'.

Secondly, there being no tables available, on to the Lion, a reliable Hall & Woodhouse Badger Ales pub, where they squeezed us in for a nice meal accompanied by an excellent pint of Fursty Ferret. The pub

dates back to 1409 and was a popular smugglers haunt. Pagham seem spoilt for large pub restaurants with the Lamb and the Bear also close!

Next day we moved to the Cathedral Close in Chichester for beautiful, if stuffier, accommodation. Most of our days were taken up with rehearsals in a hot song school and singing services in hot polyester cassocks but of course singing builds up a thirst so we investigated the local hostelries. The Fountain was a lifeline as it had consistently good Hall & Woodhouse Beers on. The Hole in the Wall, a beer exhibition pub, leased from Greene King by The Big Smoke Brewing company, had a few ales on but they were suffering with the heat; Harveys Sussex was not at its best, though Big Smoke, Solaris was better on a second visit. Several singers were staying at 'Trents', owned by Greene King. GK had reintroduced IPA to the pub but it wasn't on. Choice of pubs in the three evenings there was limited by early evening closing post Covid and being on foot. After a hard day singing on Sunday there were no pubs open in the evening except The Dolphin & Anchor, a Wetherspoons. They only had two beers on offer - Central Line Red from Portobello, and Adnams Broadside. Sadly the Portobello was off and had to be exchanged for the Adnams, which was just OK. This all sounds like we had a bad time, beer-wise, around Chichester but in general we found some reasonable ale!



On our way home we headed to a favourite. The Flowerpots Pub and Brewery and my goodness the beer was good!!!! A fine way to end.

*Gary Mudd*

# The Firkin

Published every three months by the North Bedfordshire Branch of

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. The Firkin is produced and distributed by volunteers to most pubs and clubs in Bedfordshire north of a line joining the M1, Clophill, Shefford and Tempsford. We welcome correspondence and any relevant features for publication. Views expressed here may not be those of the Editor, the Campaign for Real Ale, or its North Bedfordshire Branch.

Items for publication in the next issue should reach the Editor by the date shown at the foot of this page. Edited by Fytton Rowland, 73 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3TA  
[firkin@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:firkin@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

Printed by Zenith Media

Advertising sales by Neil Richards MBE, Paper Red Media Tel 01536 358670 Mob 07710 281381 [N.Richards@btinternet.com](mailto:N.Richards@btinternet.com)

©Campaign for Real Ale Ltd 2023

## Contact us

### Chairman, Magazine Editor and Pubs Protection Officer

Fytton Rowland - 07753 694785

[chairman@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

[firkin@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:firkin@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

[pubprotection@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubprotection@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Secretary and Pub Campaigns Co-ordinator

Peter Argyle - 01234 822698

[secretary@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

[pubcampaigns@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubcampaigns@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Finance Mike Parks

[treasurer@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Festival Organiser Kath Lilley

[beerfestival@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:beerfestival@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Socials Gary Mudd - 01234 741871

[socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Press Officer and Clubs Officer Roger Stokes

[treasurer@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

[pressofficer@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:pressofficer@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

[clubsofficer@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:clubsofficer@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Membership Neil Ratnett - 01234 344388

[membership@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Pub Data Co-ordinator Paul Barnes

[pubdata@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubdata@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Website Kath Lilley

[webmaster@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

### Cider Rep - Vacant

[cider-representative@northbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:cider-representative@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

# Branch Diary

CAMRA North Bedfordshire branch business meetings are normally held on the second Thursday of alternate months.

Social events are usually 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/diary](http://northbeds.camra.org.uk/diary).

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](mailto:socials@northbeds.camra.org.uk)

**See the branch website for diary information**



## 10 great reasons to join CAMRA

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1 CAMPAIGN</b><br>for great beer, cider and perry                  | <b>2 Become a BEER EXPERT</b>                            |
| <b>3 Enjoy CAMRA BEER FESTIVALS</b><br>in front of or behind the bar. | <b>4 GET INVOLVED</b><br>and make new friends            |
| <b>5 Save YOUR LOCAL</b>  | <b>6 Find the BEST PUBS IN BRITAIN</b>                   |
| <b>7 Get great VALUE FOR MONEY</b>                                    | <b>8 DISCOVER</b><br>pub heritage and the great outdoors |
| <b>9 Enjoy great HEALTH BENEFITS</b><br>(real!)                       | <b>10 HAVE YOUR SAY</b>                                  |

## What's yours?

Discover your reason and join the campaign today;  
[www.camra.org.uk/10reasons](http://www.camra.org.uk/10reasons)





A quintessential village pub

Real ales - Greene King IPA & Abbot regular, plus up to three guest ales

Relaxed charm of a village local with a varied menu of quality home cooked food

*No gimmicks - just a great British pub!*

## Bell, Odell

Horsefair Lane  
MK43 7AU

01234 910850



TheBellInOdell

Opening times:

Mon-Thu 11.30-2.30,  
5-11; Fri-Sat 11.30-  
11.30; Sun 12-10.30



17th century thatched and boarded traditional village pub with character and charm

Experience a relaxing welcoming environment

Enjoy fine beers and wines, quality food and friendly service

Cask Beers:  
Greene King IPA,  
St Austell  
Tribute, Timothy  
Taylor Landlord

## Welcome to The Three Compasses

Wellingborough Row  
Upper Dean  
PE28 0NE



(01234) 708346

Open: 4-11 Mon-Fri  
12-11 Sat & Sun

thethreecompasses.co.uk  
info@thethreecompasses.co.uk  
TheThreeCompassesUpperDean

## The Polhill Arms, Renhold

We're just a short drive or a leisurely stroll through the village or along the path.

Perfectly placed for drinks & eats with family & friends.



*Cask conditioned ales, ciders & so much more.*

10% discount for CAMRA members on real ales & ciders.

Children's play area & enclosed garden, sunny patio & large car park.

Light bites menu available eves & weekends.

*For details of our regular events, follow us on Facebook & Instagram.*

Open: Tues -Thurs from 4pm. / Fri - Sun from 12pm

25 Wilden Road, Bedford, MK41 0JP



01234 771398

Find us on

## ENGINEERS ARMS, HENLOW FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2023 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September –  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September  
MINI BEER FEESTIVAL  
FEATURING OVER 20  
DERBYSHIRE BREWERIES

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October –  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October  
"DARK SIDE OF THE  
MONTH" – Over 20  
Porters, Stouts and Milds

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November –  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November  
"SUFFOLK n EASY" – 20+  
beers from this lovely  
County



THERE'S STORIES  
FROM THE WEEKEND,  
THEN THERE'S

YOU JUST  
HAD TO BE THERE

ASCOT  RACEDAYS

AUTUMN RACING WEEKEND & BEER FESTIVAL  
FRIDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> - SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

JOIN US FOR A WEEKEND OF RACING AND DISCOVER OVER 170 BEERS, CIDERS  
AND PERRIES AT THE ASCOT BEER FESTIVAL IN ASSOCIATION WITH CAMRA.

**50% OFF QUEEN ANNE ENCLOSURE TICKETS, USE CODE: CAMRA2023**

VISIT [ASCOT.COM](http://ASCOT.COM) FOR TICKETS

