Barrel

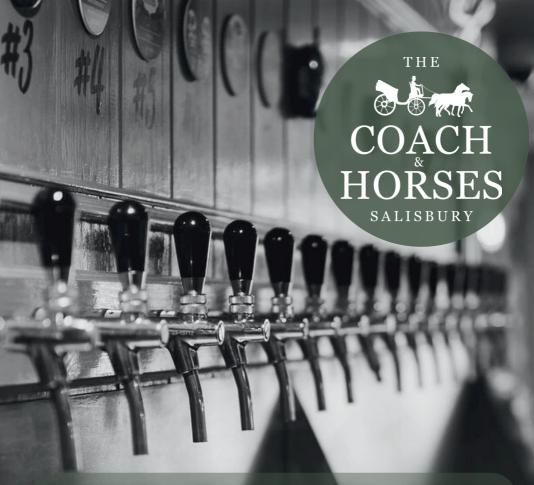


The magazine of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

June 2025 - August 2025



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FROM THE EDITORS

oom and gloom has surrounded the future of British pubs for so long that it is wonderful to be more optimistic in this issue of *Barrel Organ*. Our Pubs Officer, Sue Turner, begins her column: "happily, I can open this issue's update with the good news that lots of pubs are reopening." She then cites a list of pubs in South Wiltshire which have once again welcomed customers through their doors or plan to do so soon. Particularly welcome was the news that the much-loved Hook and Glove in Farley had been rescued by a local couple just a week after apparently closing for good.

Barrel Organ travelled to Chitterne on the edge of Salisbury Plain for an update on the future of the King's Head which has been rescued by an extraordinary community campaign to buy and reopen the pub. There our correspondent met Nick and Jo White, pictured on our front cover, who have given up the managership of a wellestablished pub in Bath to take over the lease at the King's Head. They wanted the freedom to run a business as they wanted to in a lovely village. Remarkably, they were one of 24 applicants who contacted the Chitterne Community Pub Group.

Meanwhile Old Sarum brewers Dark Revolution reveal in our Brewery News column that it will take over The Dust Hole in Tollgate Road, Salisbury, which faced an uncertain future after its previous tenants shut up shop in April. Dark Revolution will effectively run it as an extra Tap Room to showcase its beers. The many problems assailing the British pub industry have not gone away and we also report some local closures. But for once let's focus on the good news.

Kathy, Will & Neil

Editors, Barrel Organ magazine

SALISBURY & SOUTH WILTSHIRE CONTACTS

Chairman: Chris White

Email: chairman@salisburycamra.org.uk

Secretary: Steve Stringer Email: secretary@salisburycamra.org.uk

Social Secretary (Co-ordinating): Steve Stringer Email: social.secretary@salisburycamra.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Roger Braddick Email: membership@salisburycamra.org.uk

Pubs Officer: Sue Turner Email: pubs@salisburycamra.org.uk

Festival Organiser: Andrew Hesketh (and team) Email: andrew.hesketh@salisburycamra.org.uk

Branch website:

www.salisburycamra.org.uk

Branch area: The Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch covers the whole of the south of the county having incorporated the area around Mere, Hindon, Zeals and Semley. While Salisbury is by far the largest population centre in the branch's territory, there are several smaller towns such as Amesbury and Wilton and large villages like Downton and Tisbury. The branch has nearly 140 open pubs selling real ale, about 70% of which are in rural areas.

Barrel Organ is distributed to these plus other distribution points.

EDITORS

Kathy Pascoe, Will Bennett and Neil Beagrie Email: barrel.organ@salisburycamra.org.uk

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Trading Standards (Wiltshire)

Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN Tel: 03454 040506

Email: tradingstandards@wiltshire.gov.uk, www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW Tel: 01727 867 201 Email: camra@camra.org.uk www.camra.org.uk

Advertising, Published & Designed by: PAPER RED MEDIA

Neil Richards MBE
Tel: 01536 358670
Email/s: n.richards@btinternet.com
paperredmedia@outlook.com
Website: www.paperredmedia.weebly.com



MEET THE GOVERNORS

Deacons, Fisherton Street, Salisbury



Matthew Thorne (left) and Benny Goldsmith behind the bar at Deacons

As the backdrop to a business proposition, it could scarcely have been more unconventional. Benny Goldsmith was up to his ankles in pig poo whilst volunteering at the Laverstock Community Farm on the outskirts of Salisbury when he received a phone call from his friend Matthew Thorne suggesting that they team up and buy a pub. His mind mercifully unclouded by the pungent aroma surrounding him, Benny was immediately enthusiastic and the business partnership that has taken over Deacons in the city was born.



The comfortable revamped interior of Deacons

Within a month Benny, 25, and Matthew, 30, had acquired a 10 year lease on Deacons from the freehold owner, Salisbury businessman Pete

Toogood, and taken over the Fisherton Street pub, which dates back to Victorian times. They were up and running by July last year with Toogood's help but later closed for a couple of weeks to carry out an extensive refurbishment aimed at smartening up the pub whilst retaining its essential character.

Despite their relative youth, the two Salisburyborn men are both veterans of the hospitality business. Benny, a former Bishop Wordsworth's School pupil, first worked in the industry when he was just 12 years old and he was



Matthew and Benny at the Deacons entrance

later at Deacons for a while. His encounter with the pigs at the farm in Laverstock followed his decision to leave Asahi, the Japanese beer company, for which he worked in Woking. The glamorous lifestyle he led with them, hosting events all over the UK, including at Ascot races, had begun to pall and he decided to return to Wiltshire.

Matthew originally trained as a chef and once cooked for television and radio presenter Sir Terry Wogan when the Irish-born national treasure visited The Haunch of Venison in Salisbury. "Well, it got me on the telly for five minutes," said Matthew, who, despite this feather in his cap, later decided that he preferred life front of house as a restaurant manager. He is a partner with Salisbury entrepreneur Dave Hancock in local restaurants Hixon and Tinga. But Hancock, who used to run Deacons, is not involved in the new set-up at the Fisherton Street pub, which is the first business set-up for both Matthew and Benny.





A Deacons window photographed from the inside

Both men hugely enthusiastic about their takeover Deacons. The refurbishment - two weeks of chaos when their families came in to help carry out the work - has kept the pub's traditional green colour but has managed to interior look more loved without destroying its long

history. Old photographs of former regulars are on the walls and Frogg Moody, who writes a weekly local history column in the *Salisbury Journal*, helped them source classic Fisherton Street images from the past. A window bearing the words 'Real Ales', which long predates the birth of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), has been restored with the help of a local stained glass craftsman. "We aimed to retain its character but it also needed a bit of love and care and we wanted to put our stamp on it," said Matthew.

Matthew added: "We have lightened it up a bit to make it more appealing to the younger generation. We want people to have fun in here". While a few of the pub's former regulars have not returned, most have, which is a testament to Bennie and Matthew's determination to make them feel at home.



Smart but casual – the Deacons look

Beer is an important part of the new set-up and there are always three locally-brewed real ales on tap. Two of these are ever-present – Hop Back's GFB at 3.4% ABV and Rude Giant's Session IPA at 4.3% ABV – while the third one changes. On the day *Barrel Organ* visited Deacons the 'visiting' beer was Deer Stalker, a 4.0% ABV amber ale from the Ramsbury Brewery, near Marlborough, with beers from Downton Brewery and Stonehenge Ales in Netheravon due to make their appearance shortly. Customers were particularly enthusiastic about the prospect of having Stonehenge's Danish Dynamite on tap.

"Deacons is a proper boozer," said Benny. "People have been drinking here longer than I have been on the planet. So it is important to sell good quality beer at prices



Benny and Matthew say that real ale is important

that are as reasonable as possible. We are a local pub, we want to stick to local beers and we love real ale."

At the time of writing Deacons does not serve food, other than snacks, but that may change. Benny and Matthew are talking to the owners of a Salisbury Market stand that specialises in South African food and so biltong – the famous air-cured dried meat that started out as an Afrikaaner speciality – could soon be available. Also Benny's brother Sammy, who is a food enthusiast, will start work in the kitchen once he has returned from foreign travels.

There are plans to make the Juke Box free all the time (currently this is only on Fridays) and there will also be some karaoke and live music sessions. But Benny and Matthew's priority is to build a community pub where anyone can come in, talk, relax and feel safe. "This place is a lifeline for some people and if they can come in here and talk to somebody then we are doing something right," said Benny. "The world is so stressful at the moment that we want people to come in here and forget about it."

Will Bennett



BREWERY NEWS

Dark Revolution



Dark Revolution has exciting projects lined up this year, including collaborating with Wiltshire Creative to host Salisbury Craft Beer Festival on 11-12 July in The Arts Centre,

Salisbury. The brewery is also delighted to share the news that it will be taking on The Dust Hole pub located in Tollgate Road, Salisbury. The pub will have the same vibe as its Tap Room – showcasing at least 10 lines of Dark Revolution beer and one on cask. The pub will be known as 'Dark Revolution at The Dust Hole' and is set to open in July.



The Dust Hole in Salisbury is to be taken over by local brewery Dark Revolution

It has been a busy start to the year for Dark Revolution Brewery Tap Room. Overall sales are up by 60%. This has been helped by the brewery's commitment to innovate and develop new beers; releasing 20 new ones in the first four months alone. The Tap Room continues to be a popular destination for many, acting as a community point for locals as well as seasoned beer drinkers who travel miles to try the 20 beers they have on tap. Management of the Tap Room has recently changed. In March Alistair Everett joined the team from Double Barrelled in Reading. Ali brings with him a wealth of knowledge and great ideas. A perfect fit for the team.

Hop Back



The new bottling line (2,000 bottles an hour) along with five new conditioning/storage tanks were installed in a freshly refurbished processing room during the spring.

Commissioning continued into late April and once completed productivity could increase by up to 30% allowing Hop Back to broaden its range of bottle conditioned ales.

Hop Back Growlers are a recent addition to the merchandising available from the brewery shop which is open from 9.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday. You can also ring 01725 510986 to ask what is available or order your beer 48 hours in advance.

The monthly specials will include: June/July – Dragonfly (4.8% ABV) a very popular zesty pale gold ale that showcases heritage English hops, also in July – Glasshopper (3.9% ABV) a light fruity pale ale made with a blend of New World Hops, August – Calypso (3.4% ABV) a pale ale with notes of apple, pears and stone fruit.

Dead Duck



It has been quite a year for Dead Duck with a number of firsts throughout that time. This has continued into the spring and summer with a stall and gazebo at the Downton

Cuckoo Fair. This was the first time that Paul, the head brewer, was able to meet, greet and interact with his customers. He had all four of his beers available in both cask and can format. The brewery now has a Premises Licence and is able to sell its beer online. New merchandising is also available and includes items such as gift boxes, glasses, stubby holders, tote bags and T-shirts. Dead Duck beers can be found at a growing number of pubs in the Salisbury and New Forest area and also at groceries and wine merchants in Fordingbridge and Ringwood.



Stonehenge Ales



Stonehenge Ales was present the Newton Abbott 'Maltingsfest', organised for the Society of Independent

Brewers and Associates (SIBA) South West members. With a total of 250 cask ales being served, both Old Smokey and Great Bustard were awarded Silver - much to the pride of James and Nicola.

The ever popular Urchfont Scarecrow Festival will have been staged on the first weekend in May by the time you read this, and Stonehenge beers featured heavily during the event. Weekly deliveries to both pubs and the loyal 'at home' drinkers continue at pace. A recent visit to Netheravon Working Men's Club by branch members to deliver the Club of the Year award, was rewarded with both Sign of Spring and Heel Stone being in absolute top form. Then again it is only 200 yards from the brewery!

Downton Brewery



The monthly specials for May, June and July are Moby Dick (USA IPA; 4.7% ABV), Apple Blossom **DOWNTON** (Apple-flavoured blonde; 4.3% BREWERY ABV), and Bogus Buffalo (USA IPA; 4.4% ABV), respectively.

Cave Lager is now available in 440ml cans and there are plans to bottle some of the brewery's stronger ales using the nearby Hop Back Brewery bottling plant.

A successful beer festival was held at the brewery Tap Room on 18 and 19 April over the Easter weekend. As well as 16 beers from the Downton range, guest beers from Hattie Browns, Hop Back, 8 Arch, Dark Revolution and Dead Duck breweries were on tap. Food was available on both evenings and live music on 19 April. Further beer festivals are planned for 13-14 June and 26-27 September.

Contributors in order: Sarah Hughes, John Hinton, Steve Stringer and Nigel Allison



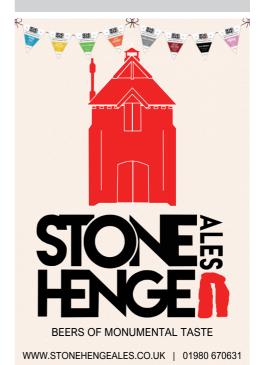


: 01794 338461

: nik@cuckooinn.com

The Cuckoo Inn Hamptworth

The Cuckoo Inn, Hamptworth road, Hamptworth, Salisbury, SP5 2DU





VERY DIFFERENT BUT UNITED BY QUALITY - LOCAL PUBS AND CLUB OF THE YEAR

The pubs and club of the year chosen by the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) reflected the amazing choice now available to drinkers in the area as well as geographical diversity. They comprised a country pub run by the same family for more than half a century, a city street corner hostelry that gave birth to a famous brewery, a historic New Forest pub brought back to life by an unlikely landlord and a club that has become the heart of a community on the edge of Salisbury Plain.

Members voted for The Horseshoe in the Chalke Valley village of Ebbesbourne Wake as Rural Pub of the Year, thereby earning it the Derek Blackshaw Trophy, named after the branch's late chairman who died in 2022. Their choice for City Pub of the Year in Salisbury was the Wyndham Arms in Estcourt Road, which was the birthplace of the Hop Back brewery and has remained its spiritual home since the latter relocated to Downton.



The Horseshoe. Left to right: Chris White, local CAMRA chairman, Pat and Tony Bath, their daughter Jayne Sanger, and Keith Foster, local CAMRA Pub of the Year co-ordinator

The decision as to which of the two should become

the overall branch **Pub of the Year** was then handed over to an independent panel from the North Hampshire branch led by CAMRA veteran John Buckley. They handed the top place to **The Horseshoe**.

Tony and Pat Bath, who have run The Horseshoe since 1986, and their daughter Jayne Sanger, were presented with their Pub of the Year certificate and with the Derek Blackshaw Trophy by Chris White, Chairman of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA, and Keith Foster, the local Pub of the Year competition co-ordinator.

"I am very pleased to be Pub of the Year, it is very kind of everybody who voted for us," said Tony Bath, who is 83 but says that he has no intention of retiring. "We are an old-fashioned pub, a rural pub and we provide good food and real ale out of a barrel not out of a pump. We also have wonderful staff."

Keith Foster said: "The Horseshoe Inn is a quintessential rural pub at the heart of its village community. There is a warm and friendly welcome to all, and a wonderful choice of well kept real ales fresh from the barrel. All can be enjoyed in a cosy setting surrounded by an extensive display of farming memorabilia."

The Bath family has an astonishing record of continuity. Tony's parents, Tom and Glad, took over The Horseshoe in 1971 and 15 years later passed the reins to their son and his wife Pat. They have now been joined by their daughter Jayne.

At the **Wyndham Arms**, manager Lisa Saberton and Dave Barton, the pub's cellarman, were presented with their City Pub of the Year certificate by Chris White and Keith Foster."I would like to say thank you to CAMRA members for voting for



us and to all our many wonderful customers," said Lisa. "We don't serve food, we are just a traditional pub serving beer. So we make sure that the quality of our ales is up to scratch."



The Wyndham Arms. Left to right: Keith Foster, of CAMRA, Dave Barton, the Wyndham's cellarman, Lisa Saberton, the pub's manager and Chris White, local CAMRA chairman

Keith Foster said: "The Wyndham Arms is a cosy, friendly city pub. A true 'local' serving the surrounding community, it is also popular with lovers of good beer being the birthplace of Hop Back beers. Whether you are a regular or an occasional visitor, you are assured a welcoming and enjoyable visit."

The Wyndham Arms, which dates back to the 1880s, has achieved international fame among beer lovers, since it was bought by John Gilbert, founder of the Hop Back brewery, in 1986. The following year he began brewing at the back of the pub but by 1991 brewing at the Wyndham Arms had reached full capacity and it moved to Downton.

The Cuckoo Inn at Hamptworth was chosen as local Cider Pub of the Year. The pub in the village on the edge of the New Forest has at least 24 different ciders on sale and the range and quality of these and the skill that landlord Nik Amplianitis shows in ensuring that they are served in top condition won him the CAMRA award. Greekborn Nik, who took over the pub near Salisbury in 2022, was presented with the winner's certificate by Jane Foster, the CAMRA branch's Cider Champion. The Cuckoo has now won the cider title three times running.



The Cuckoo Inn. Nik Amplianitis, landlord, receiving his Cider Pub of the Year certificate from Jane Foster, Cider Champion of the local branch of CAMRA

Netheravon Working Mens Club, which was founded more than 100 years ago in the village north of Amesbury, was chosen as the local Club of the Year. Gary Davis, the club's chairman, and 93 year-old trustee Pete Hayward, who became a member in 1949, received their winner's certificate from Chris White and Keith Foster.



Netheravon Working Mens Club. Left to right: Keith Foster, of CAMRA, Gary Davis, Netheravon Club's chairman, Pete Hayward, Club trustee, and Chris White, local CAMRA chairman

Keith said: "Netheravon Working Mens Club is a tremendous community asset, providing a friendly and welcoming social hub for the local population. It is a great place to meet with friends for a drink, including some well kept real ales, and a chat, and to take part in a range of activities and social events."



TICKETS ON SALE FOR **SUMMERFEST 2025** SALISBURY'S SUMMER BEER FESTIVAL



Salisbury Guildhall provided a superb location for Summerfest last year

lickets have gone on sale for Summerfest, Salisbury's popular summer beer and cider festival, which will be returning to the city's Guildhall on 20 - 21 June 2025. Local ales will be at the heart of the festival, which is run by the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

Drinks will be sold in half pint and one-third of a pint measures and card-carrying CAMRA members will get half a pint free. Having listened to customer feedback from last year, we are extending the closing time on Saturday evening to 9.00pm and splitting the day into two separate sessions.

Tickets for the Friday and Saturday lunchtime sessions cost £12. As an introductory offer for our Saturday evening session we are charging just £8. The 2024 event sold out in advance so anyone wishing to attend the 2025 festival is advised to book now at www.salisburycamra. org.uk/events

The festival will begin on Friday 20 June at 6:30pm through to 11.00pm and continue on Saturday 21 June from 11.00am to 3.00pm and then 5.00pm to 9.00pm.

"Last year's Summerfest and this January's

Winterfest both went very well and I am sure that our customers will once again enjoy hospitality the Guildhall," said Andrew Hesketh. Festivals Co-ordinator for the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA. "We are bringing back a music session on the Friday evening



Singer Eve N Song will be making a welcome return to Summerfest

featuring the lovely Eve N Song, who gave us such a wonderful performance last year."

"Summerfest will continue the tradition of a comfortable, conversation-led festival and, of course, an excellent range of real ales and ciders," said Andrew. "Beers on sale will feature a variety of ales selected both locally and from further afield but beers and ciders from Wiltshire and the surrounding counties will be at the heart of the festival."

All images: Salisbury CAMRA



The new Summerfest logo designed by Salisbury artist Fred Fieber



OLD SARUM BREWERY DARK REVOLUTION WINS WINTERFEST BEER OF FESTIVAL

smooth oatmeal stout brewed by Dark Revolution from Old Sarum was voted the Beer of the Festival by those who attended Winterfest, Salisbury's muchloved winter beer and cider festival organised by the local branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). The winner's certificate for Dark Matter was presented to Sam Dyer, Dark Revolution's Tap Room Manager, by Salisbury & South Wiltshire CAMRA representatives Andrew Hesketh and Mike Bird.



Sam Dyer (centre), Dark Revolution Tap Room Manager, receives the winner's certificate from Andrew Hesketh (left) and Mike Bird (right) of CAMRA. Photo: Roger Braddick

Dark Matter is a blend of eight different malts which combine to produce a smooth 5.7% ABV stout which appealed to the experienced tastebuds of the knowledgeable crowd who go to Winterfest. It was the most popular of 24 real ales available at Winterfest, which was held at The Guildhall in the centre of Salisbury in late January.

"We are very, very happy to receive this award and to be recognized by CAMRA," said Sam Dyer, after receiving the certificate when a group from CAMRA visited the brewery on the Old Sarum Industrial Estate. "It is nice that a local brewery won the award and we look forward to contributing beers to Summerfest in Salisbury in June".

Andrew Hesketh, festivals co-ordinator for the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA, said: "Dark Revolution has built up a great reputation for brewing delicious and innovative beers and it is not surprising that festival-goers voted it their favourite. We aim to showcase local beers – about half those on offer at Winterfest were from the Salisbury area – and it was good that one of them topped the poll."

The first two runners-up were from elsewhere in the country. Tonkoko, Brew York's milk stout, came second, while the Fixed Wheel Brewery, from Halesowen, West Midlands, was voted third with its Blackheath Stout. However one-man micro-brewery Small Paul from Gillingham, kept the flag flying for north Dorset by coming fourth with Gylla's IPA.

Will Bennett





PUB NEWS

Here is a round-up of local pub news since the last issue of Barrel Organ.

Happily, I can open this issue's update with the good news that lots of pubs are reopening. The Green Dragon at Alderbury recently closed but, following a refurbishment by the Longford Estate, it is hoping to reopen in June and The Old Mill at Harnham, following its grand launch event in early March, is now fully open. The Greater Good at Fovant opened in mid-March and the new management is settling in well, as is Ricardo, new landlord at the recently reopened **Duck Inn**, Laverstock. The Malet Arms at Newton Tony has a new owner, Nicholas, who has reopened the pub after a 10 day makeover and will be open every day from 12 midday except Monday and Tuesday. The King's Head at Chitterne has been saved by a collective of community shareholders and following an extensive refurbishment they hope to open in June, as soon as new tenants Jo and Nick White arrive from Bath (see article elsewhere in this issue of Barrel Organ). The Rose and Crown at Bulford has been taken over by Judy and Nigel who are opening all day from 12.00 midday with a new menu and three ales.

Over the Easter weekend the former Rude Giant premises on Brown Street in Salisbury were reopened by owners **The Chapel** night club as **BSG** (**Brown Street Garden**). Billed as a sister venue to The Chapel, BSG houses two Barcadia gaming areas, a DJ set-up, a pizza kitchen and an outside bar. News broke on 1 April which sadly was not an April Fool. The much-loved **Hook and Glove** at Farley would be closing with immediate effect due to long-standing owners Fiona and Pete's retirement (after a 40-year association with the pub and 13 years' ownership) and difficulty finding someone to take over. After just a week of disappointment for everyone in the village and beyond, a very

welcome announcement was made that a local couple had stepped in and were happy to rescue the business. After a general refurbishment and restock the pub will be open again soon.

More shock news came from Sips, the bar at The Maltings in Salisbury. Due to some administrative difficulties, owner Jacob was suddenly forced to close whilst the matter was resolved. During the closure period Sips engaged in a number of successful pop-up events in pubs and breweries around Wiltshire. Thankfully normal service was resumed in May once the paperwork problems had been ironed out. Another unexpected closure was The Bell and Crown in Salisbury. Its sister pub, The Pheasant, remains open. Also, after a 20 year tenancy, Tony, Carol and Antonia at The Dusthole on Tollgate Road, Salisbury, have closed their doors for the last time. (For a surprise announcement about The Dusthole's future see Brewery News in this issue of Barrel Organ).

News broke of the closure of the The Penruddocke Arms, Dinton but soon after this, it was announced that a previous management team had returned to the pub to take over. According to reports, the locals are thrilled to have them back. Owner-landlady Debbie tried hard to keep The Forester at Donhead St. Andrew open but after several months of improvements she reluctantly closed the doors. Sadly the tenants at The White Horse at Quidhampton are leaving by June and the pub will close unless Stonegate can find replacements. The Kershaws have worked so hard to make the pub a focal part of the community, but they can no longer continue funding the struggling business. The village will miss them.



Whitbread's application for Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the Hampton Inn Table Table at Bishopdown's Premier Inn, confirming its use as a restaurant, has been rejected by Wiltshire Council Planning Department. It seems they were not convinced that the premises had been operating solely as a restaurant for the last 10 years!

Finally, a quick round-up of news across the branch - The Fox and Hounds, East Knovle and The Carriers Inn at Stockton have both had Assets of Community Value orders requested by Wiltshire Council. The Swan at Enford is now open at 10.00am Wednesday to Sunday for 'great coffee', **The Cuckoo Inn** at Hamptworth has reduced the CAMRA member discount from 10% to 5%, The Grove Arms at Ludwell has been taken off the market, Deacons in Salisbury has had a makeover (see 'Meet the

Governors' in this issue of Barrel Organ), The Village Freehouse has updated its opening hours, the Salisbury and South Wilts Sports Club now serves real ale and sadly, The Railway **Club** in Salisbury closed without notice, citing lack of funds.

> Sue Turner Pubs Officer







VILLAGE'S AMAZING CAMPAIGN TO GET ITS PUB BACK NEARS THE FINISHING LINE



Jo and Nick White behind the bar at The King's Head

ampaigners in a small South Wiltshire village who have fought to get their pub back for five years will see their hard work bear fruit later this month when The King's Head in Chitterne finally reopens its doors. The Chitterne Community Pub Group (CCPG) raised much of the sale price of £315,000 through a share issue and, with the help of a loan from an anonymous private investor, took possession of the pub from its locally-based freehold owner just before last Christmas.

Since then the CCPG has been hard at work renovating the pub and selecting new licensees who will take over running it. The former has involved a hard core of about 30 volunteers - about 10% of the population of the isolated village on the southern edge of Salisbury Plain - putting in hundreds of hours of work cleaning, scraping, disposing of rubbish, clearing the garden, and making curtains and cushions. The group hired a local company, D & H Construction, to do the building work.

The biggest jobs were completely revamping the kitchen and sorting out suitable tenant accommodation over the pub but in addition to that the bar has been repainted and new equipment such as a dishwasher installed. Despite the volunteer input, the work has cost another £60,000 to £70,000 of which £25,000 came from a very welcome grant from Wiltshire Council's Community Hub Fund.



John Dilllon (CCPG), new licensees Nick and Jo White, John Terry and Mike Neve (both CCPG)

As the CCPG gradually brought the building back to life - it has been open as a pub since the mid-19th century - the group set about finding new licensees to run it. There were 24 applications and from these the group chose the hugely experienced Nick and Jo White, who have taken on a fiveyear lease. The couple have been managers of the Charlcombe Inn at Lansdown, Bath for the past 10 years and before that ran a pub in Gloucestershire which was chosen as Rural Pub of the Year by the local branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

"We are managers where we are at the moment and we feel that it is time to take on our own lease and do what we want," said Nick when he and his wife paid a visit to the King's Head before taking over. "We are looking forward to moving into a



nice village and serving good beer and good quality home-cooked pub food."

Nick will be chef and the cellarman while Jo will be front of house. He plans to have three real ales on at any given time with Butcombe Original as the permanent beer and two guest ales changing regularly. He has already been in touch with Stonehenge Ales at Netheravon and plans to have them as one supplier and will check out other local breweries. "Real ale is important to us," he said.

The plan is to serve coffee and cakes in the morning and full breakfasts at the weekend so that the CCPG's declared aim of turning the King's Head into a community hub will become a reality. Chitterne has no shop, no cafe, no school, very little public transport and the next village is three miles away. Phase 2 of the project may involve setting up a shop selling essential items but how this would work and who would run it has not yet been decided. Getting the pub up and running successfully takes priority.

In the meantime the CCPG is looking to add to its current total of 110 shareholders, who include a number of people who have recently moved to the village. Although the Whites have taken over the pub business, the group is still responsible for the bricks and mortar and for possible further developments such as the shop. The minimum shareholding allowed is £250 and the maximum is £100,000. Further details can be found at www. chitternechs.co.uk

Will Bennett

MARTIN HOWARD R.I.P



ributes have been paid to Martin Howard, a life member of CAMRA and a former director of Downton Brewery, who died on Easter Sunday aged 85. Martin, who lived in Salisbury, was a real ale enthusiast, who had spent many

years working on the railways and was responsible for the database that held all the information on British Rail (later Railtrack) assets such as bridges, stations, track and signals.

So perhaps it was appropriate that he often indulged his love of ale in pubs near railway stations - The Digby Tap in Sherborne, The Prince of Wales in Farnborough, The Queen's Arms at Basingstoke and, of course, The Village Freehouse in Salisbury, where he was to be found most evenings.

He was for many years a director of Downton Brewery, near Salisbury. Martin Strawbridge, now owner and head brewer, said: "This is truly sad news. I first met Martin in my job interview to become Downton Brewery's first brewer in 2003. As an enthusiastic managing director, Martin was always

keen for us to experiment with new beer styles as well as rediscovering ones that were seldom seen. A gooseberry wheat beer, brewed many years before fruit sours were popular, and a traditional mild were just a couple of examples of his ideas."

Martin was also a close friend of John Gilbert, who founded the Hop Back brewery in the Wyndham Arms in Salisbury, and many years ago could always be found in the Wyndham on a Saturday afternoon. He was a shareholder in Hop Back, which, due to increasing demand, moved to an industrial estate in Downton.

Martin, who always carried an umbrella regardless of what the weather was doing, loved spending time in pubs. Martin Strawbridge recalled: "As an avid pub-goer, Martin was in his element sitting at the bar engaging in conversation with old friends, new acquaintances and bar staff alike. Many hours could easily pass and the world would often be put to rights!" Ian Turner, twice chairman of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA, added: "I recall spending many hours talking to Martin, who had strong views on just about everything!"



ON THE BUSES

'What a lovely day out' was the universal verdict after our return visit to the charming town of Stockbridge, home to expensive shops and ancient pubs. Again there were six of us, who embarked on the 68 and started the day with excellent coffee and cake, followed by a walk to the White Hart where a choice of Hop Back, Hophead, London Pride, ESB and Grand Slam awaited us, the last one replaced by Hogs Back TEA while we lunched. A stroll back through the glorious spring sunshine was followed by a final drink in the Three Cups where the choice was Ringwood 49er, Perridge Pale and Pots.



CAMRA party at the White Hart, Stockbridge

Another foray up the Chalke Valley on the 29 took in the White Hart at Bishopstone for lunch, where coincidentally we were joined by another bus excursion from Salisbury who ostensibly are interested in history but always seem to end up at a pub. Despite the large and largely unexpected number of visitors, everyone received lunch in good time to meet the bus schedules. We then travelled further up the valley to the Talbot at Berwick St John.

Our train trip to Gillingham and Sherborne was very well attended with 10 of us making the trip from Salisbury and two more joining from Templecombe. Our first port of call was the Phoenix in Gillingham, with a breakaway group

moving to the Red Lion. This was followed by a trip further down the line to the excellent Digby Tap in Sherborne.

A good crowd made it to the Park Inn in Southampton - by various different means - for the South Hants branch event there. Unfortunately Pete was on his own for a visit to the Witches Brew in Southampton, prompting him to write: 'At present I am Billy No Mates. What trips would you go on?, What days are best? It's our branch's 50th year. Previously we managed to run coaches to breweries and pubs. Why the decline? No one else turned up, but I had a great afternoon.' All feedback about trips to ptc@salisburycamra.org.uk please.

Andrew Ward and Pete Matthews





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DIARY DATES Salisbury & South Wiltshire

JUNE

4th Open Branch Meeting. 7.30pm The Duck, Laverstock.

7th Train Social

To three Good Beer Guide pubs in St Denys area, Southampton. Train leaves Salisbury 11.56am, arrives St Denys 12.41pm. Visit South Western Arms, 38-40 Adelaide Road, SO17 2HW; Bookshop Alehouse, 21 Portswood Road, SO17 2ES; Guide Dog, 38 Earl's Road, SO14 6SF. Return from St Denys 3.30pm or 4.30pm, arriving Salisbury 4.15pm or 5.15pm. Other trains available.

18th City Saunter

7.30pm start at Wyndham Arms, then The Winchester Gate, and The Coach & Horses, all Salisbury.

20th Summerfest day one

6.30pm to 11.00pm, Salisbury Guildhall.

21st Summerfest day two

11.00am to 3.00pm and 5.00pm to 9.00pm, Salisbury Guildhall.

JULY

2nd Open Branch Meeting

7.30pm The Ox Row Inn, Ox Row, Salisbury.

5th Train Social

To Mottisfont and Chandlers Ford. Train leaves Salisbury 11.56am, arrives Mottisfont 12.14pm. Visit Mill Arms, Mottisfont. Train leaves Mottisfont 1.14pm, arrives Chandlers Ford 1.56pm. Visit Steel Tank, Chandlers Ford. Return from Chandlers Ford 3.14pm or 4.14pm, arrive Salisbury 4.15 or 5.15pm.

11th Minibus Trip

7.00pm pick-up Salisbury Coach Park. Dead Duck Brewery Tap, Hale; Downton Brewery Tap, Downton; Radnor Arms, Nunton.

16th City Saunter

7.30pm Deacons, Sips, The King's Head and The Old Ale & Coffee House, all Salisbury.

28th Bus Social

To Shaftesbury. Depart on 29 bus at 10.20am from

stop M, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury. Arrive Shaftesbury 11.52am. Walk to Two Brewers and then return to The Mitre for lunch. Bus returns 2.44pm, arriving Salisbury 4.18pm.

AUGUST

2nd (Saturday) Annual General Meeting From 12.00 midday, Salisbury Rugby Club.

9th Bus Social

To Pewsey to visit The Crown Inn and The Shed Alehouse (opens 2.00pm). X5 bus leaves stop M, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury at 10.55am (or 12.25pm if missing The Crown Inn). Return on the X5 leaving 3.38pm or 5.08pm, arriving Salisbury 4.40pm or 6.10pm.

15th Minibus Trip

7.00pm pickup Salisbury coach park. The Hatchet Inn, Lower Chute; The Crown Inn, Cholderton, The Rose & Crown, Bulford (new tenants); and the King's Head, Chitterne (re-opened by community, new tenants).

20th City Saunter

7.30pm The Huntsman Tavern, The Rai d'Or, The Bell & Crown (if open) and The Market Tavern, all Salisbury.

23rd Bus Social

To Studland. Timings subject to change. Depart 9.55am on X3 from stop M, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury. Arrive Westover Road, Bournemouth stop 3 at 11.10am. Short break then walk a few metres to stop T, Bournemouth Square for Breezer 50 departure at 11.34am. Alight Beach Road, Studland at 12.25pm. Eight minutes walk to Bankes Arms. Return walk to depart at 3.29pm from Beach Road, arriving stop P, Bournemouth Square at 4.24pm. Walk to Westover Road stop 3 to depart on X3 at 4.45pm. Arrive Salisbury 6.15pm.

To contact our bus and train socials team email ptc@salisburycamra.org.uk

Please check all hus and train times due to changing timetables For huses see Salishury Reds website www.salishuryreds.co.uk



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