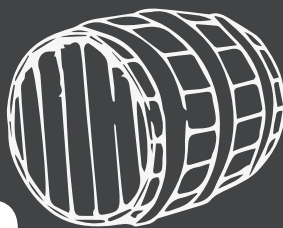


Barrel Organ



 CAMRA

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

September 2026 - November 2026

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IN THIS ISSUE

THE NEW INN,
AMESBURY

CUCKOO'S REGIONAL
CIDER WIN

NORTHUMBERLAND
PUBS WALK

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FROM THE EDITORS

Thank heavens that people still want to be pub landlords. There is something about running a pub and being at the heart of a community that draws potential licensees in. The reality is that it is extremely tough. The hours are long, the profits frequently slim or non-existent, pubcos and giant breweries strangle many pubs and UK governments have been unsympathetic. The Burnham administration's 20% cut to business rates for pubs and social clubs is a welcome step in the right direction but Whitehall (or should it be Manchester?!) has a long way to go.

But still licensees keep coming and there is no better example than Nate Saitch and Jema Paull who have battled their way through a series of obstacles since taking over The New Inn in Amesbury a year ago. They probably anticipated some of them but Jema falling 7ft down a hole in the pub floor and having to be rescued by the emergency services was not on their list of potential problems. You can read their story in this issue of *Barrel Organ* and a photo of Nate is on our front cover.

Then there is Nik Amplianitis, who took over at The Cuckoo in Hamptworth four years ago. Nik comes from Greece where cider is not a national drink. But The Cuckoo has been chosen as CAMRA's Regional Cider Pub of the Year and now has a chance of winning the national title. Nik not only likes cider but he clearly loves being a landlord and has restored the fortunes of The Cuckoo. So Nik, Nate and Jema and our other landlords deserve our support. Without their hard work, pubs would not survive and Britain would be the poorer for it.

Will, Sue & Neil
Editors, Barrel Organ magazine

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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.

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MEET THE GOVERNORS

The New Inn, Amesbury



*Nate Saitch behind the bar of
The New Inn, Amesbury*

Getting a pub back on its feet when you have no previous experience of the hospitality trade is never going to be easy but Nate Saitch and Jema Paull did not envisage how many challenges they would face when they took over The New Inn in Amesbury. The plan to revive the 17th century pub in the town's High Street originally also involved another couple but they pulled out at an early stage and so Nate and Jema decided to continue on their own.

The New Inn needed a lot of work doing to it when they got the keys in September last year aiming to re-open it the following month. Nate says that Jema is "a great project manager" and so it proved with his partner applying her formidable energies – she also runs a security company in Southampton – to hitting the deadline. The kitchen needed a £20,000 revamp, gas equipment had to be upgraded, electrical work carried out and the interior cleaned, repainted and refurbished.



Nate Saitch with his partner Jema Paull

Then just two weeks before they were due to re-open, The New Inn attracted a huge amount of publicity for all the wrong reasons. Jema fell 7ft down a hole which had been cut in the pub's floor to install glass allowing a view into the historic cellar below. Emergency services vehicles filled the street outside before paramedics and firefighters eventually carefully lifted her to safety after four hours down the hole. The story made headlines around the world. Once she had been checked out in hospital, she returned to the pub, propped herself up on the sofa and carried on working.

The refurbishment went right down to the wire with a plumber finishing connecting up the glasswasher just minutes before they opened. But however carefully you plan a pub opening, there is always something that slips through the net. When a customer ordered a bottle of wine, Nat and Jema realised that they did not have a corkscrew. One of The New Inn team rushed across the road to The George Hotel where the landlord roared with laughter and gave them two corkscrews as a present.

The couple are now approaching their first anniversary at the pub. At the end of July, they completed the purchase of the New Inn and now own the bricks and mortar as well as the business. They have kept up the brisk pace of change with a new sports room with television, pool table and dartboard having opened in the backyard. A darts team has been formed, the crib players have come back to the pub and a New Inn football team will be playing next season. Next up will be a function room in an outbuilding for parties and wedding receptions.

Nate, who has been around pubs all his life, including providing security at clubs, bars and pubs, but has never run one before, has a clear idea of what he wants The New Inn to be. "It is a quintessentially English town pub and we needed to make it warmer and more welcoming,



The New Inn is in Amesbury's High Street



The smart interior of The New Inn

an extension of people's own front room", he said. "We want it to be a community pub, a space where people can feel comfortable".

Jema and Nate are spreading their definition of community as widely as possible. Every other Thursday morning for two hours they have a 'latte and laughter' session for neuro-divergent people who have autism, Down's Syndrome or other conditions that mean that normally they would not feel comfortable walking into a pub. They have been a great success with attendees relaxing, enjoying themselves and noticeably growing in confidence.

Food is a big priority with two chefs providing good quality pub grub backed up by local youngsters being given paid experience of working in a kitchen. Nate, a beer lover who used to run a tasting podcast called 'Pour Some More' always has two cask ales on. One of them is Fuller's London Pride, a popular widely-recognized brand, while the other comes from Stonehenge Ales, based a few miles away in Netheravon. On the day that *Barrel Organ* came to The New Inn, Stonehenge's renowned Danish Dynamite was on tap.

"I like to support a local brewery such as Stonehenge," said Nate. "But I can't really have more than two cask beers on as that fulfils the appetite for real ales around here and means that I can keep the beers fresh. I am quite fussy about keeping them fresh."



The games room is a new feature of the pub

"Business has been good and trade better than expected," he said. "We have had fantastic support from the locals and everybody has got behind the ethos of us being a community pub. The roast dinners have been very popular and the thing that has surprised me is the amount of tourists that have come in. We have had people from the USA, Canada, continental Europe and from as far away as New Zealand. Sometimes 50% of the lunchtime business has come from tourists."



The spacious back yard

Nate and Jema both admit that the past year has been a steep learning curve. She had never pulled a pint before while he knew about beer but not about wine and cocktails. However having weathered so many storms they feel that the family-friendly and dog-friendly New Inn is back where it belongs at the heart of the Amesbury community.

Will Bennett

BREWERY NEWS

Dark Revolution



It has been a busy and exciting period for Dark Revolution Brewery and Taproom, with plenty happening both in the brewery and across the wider beer

community. The brewery recently launched the first in a series of highly anticipated beer releases with The Fog, a 5.4% ABV Hazy DDH Pale. The beer received excellent reviews and quickly gained traction with beer fans across the UK, with Dark Revolution outlets launching the beer simultaneously over the same weekend. The release helped draw customers into taprooms and venues, creating plenty of excitement around the new beer.

The brewery has also welcomed a new brewer to the team, strengthening its brewing operation as the business continues to grow. Amongst other events, Dark Revolution beers will once again be pouring at the End of the Road in Dorset and were also at WOMAD in North Wiltshire - two of the UK's most prestigious festivals - giving festival-goers the opportunity to enjoy the brewery's beers in two very different but equally vibrant settings.

Closer to home, the Dark Revolution Taproom continues to build momentum and attract new customers through an increasingly diverse programme of events. Recent highlights have included Pigtails & Pints, a hair up masterclass hosted by a local hairdresser, helping parents learn how to style their daughters' hair for school mornings while enjoying a beer. The Taproom has also hosted food and beer pairing events, brewery tours and a range of other activities. With new beers, new events and plenty more planned, Dark Revolution is continuing to bring people together through great beer and a real sense of community.

Hop Back



There is an interesting back story to September's Hop Back special 'Beereux Tapestry' which has been brewed to mark the return of the Bayeux Tapestry to

British soil. The label's artwork has been taken from a drawing by Bill Tidy MBE (known for his cartoons in CAMRA's *What's Brewing* and *Private Eye*). The original cartoon is in the form of a scroll and is over five feet long. It was auctioned at a CAMRA awards night and carefully stored at Hop Back for many years.

The seasonal specials will include: September - Beereux Tapestry (4.2% ABV) a rich brown ale; October - Green Hopped (4.3% ABV) a golden ale made with freshly picked hops; November - both Red Ember (4.6%ABV) and Winter Lightning (5.5% ABV) make a welcome return. The brewery shop which also stocks a range of T-shirts and other products is open from 0900 - 1600 Monday to Friday. You can also ring 01725 510986 to ask what beers are available or to order your beers 48 hours in advance.



Bill Tidy's
cartoon used
on Hop Back's
Beereux
Tapestry ale

Dead Duck



There has been an increased demand for Dead Duck beers over recent months and to keep up with this the brewery has expanded with the addition of a

shiny new fermenter with a 600 litre capacity. To accommodate this, the minibar was the unfortunate victim that had to be moved outside. This work was all done during the baking hot weeks of the early summer and you can only imagine the fun that must have been.

With more outlets, more casks were also needed

to supply them. There is now a very tidy stack of Dead Duck casks all marked up in Dead Duck colours for easy identification. All five Dead Duck beers are available in both cask and canned live beer format and can be found at an increasing number of venues. These include a growing number of *Good Beer Guide* pubs in and around the New Forest and also at the pop-up pub hosted at Lover Old School. Local grocery stores also stock Dead Duck beer and you can purchase directly from the website.

Stonehenge Ales



Have sympathy for the brewer this summer with the mercury stuck in the upper regions of almost unbearable. The task most dreaded is removing the spent grain from the mash tun, it is hot sticky work even in the cooler months. It has to be dug from the vessel by hand once the wort has been drawn off, and you do not stop until it is finished!



Steve Stringer (right),
CAMRA's Brewery Liaison Officer,
presents James Robinson
of Stonehenge Ales with his
CAMRA award for Great Bustard

in the Premium Bitter category for the South Central and South West regions. Two miles from the brewery at The Swan, Enford, Great Bustard has proved the stalwart of their cask offering, outselling all other cask beers. On reading this, the seasonal Eye Opener bitter at 4.5% ABV should be on a handpump near you. This will be followed by Mystic the 4.5% ABV brown ale as we move toward the cooler months.

At Stonehenge Ales they know the brews are award winners, and that is the spur to keep going. The latest accolade is CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain bronze for Great Bustard,

Rude Giant



The summer has been going from strength to strength with sales to busy pubs and festivals. Rude Giant's collaboration with the Rock N Ribs festival in

Somerset, and locally Stofest, saw the cellars empty and ready for a quick restock before the next big events at Thruxton Racing. The brewery has seen an increase in interest in its fully gluten-free range of beers and is exploring sales through Amazon Marketplace to reach this growing market.

Its pub, The Royal Oak at Great Wishford, has had a fantastic start to the summer and has weekly events lined up with everything from live music to BBQs and cocktail nights.

New merchandise is incoming to keep customers repping Rude Giant and its beers on the streets. Keep an eye on the brewery's social media for updates! @rudegiantbeer

Downton Brewery



The regular Friday afternoon Taproom sessions have proved so popular that the opening time has now been brought forward from 4 pm to 12 noon. The mobile brewery van will be at Romsey Show on 12 September and a further beer festival (Oktoberfest) will be held at the brewery on 2/3 October featuring German style beers from Downton and elsewhere. A Halloween Disco will be held at the Tap Room on 31 October.

The monthly specials for September and October will be the German Pale Ale (4.2% ABV) and Wick-a-Woo (4.3% ABV), a new malty ale flavoured with English Hops. In November, the brewery is introducing a 'Stout Roulette' using the regular Oatmeal Stout as a base but combined with Mint Chocolate Stout, Espresso Stout or Port Stout. The combination will vary throughout the month.

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

PUBS AND BEERS ALONG THE NORTHUMBERLAND COAST PATH

In May we walked the Northumberland Coast Path, a National Trail covering 65 miles of the magnificent coastline from Cresswell to Berwick-upon-Tweed. As well as the scenery, we enjoyed many local hostleries and their beers along the way.



Keith and Jane Foster with Bamburgh Castle in the background

Our first day's walk ended in **Warkworth**, a village dominated by a magnificent 12th-century castle. Here we frequented **The Masons Arms**, a grade II listed 18th century pub busy with both visitors and locals. It served two house beers, Warkworth's Masons Arms Blonde Ale and Warkworth's Pale, both brewed by Theakston, alongside two Timothy Taylor beers, Golden Best and Landlord. All were good. Especially outstanding was the Warkworth's Pale.



Beer pumps at The Mason's Arms, Warkworth

Our second day's walk ended at **The Jolly Fisherman** in **Craster**, a harbourside *Good Beer Guide* (GBG) pub and a popular destination for walkers. Sitting on their terrace with views of the coast and Dunstanburgh Castle, we savoured a very good and refreshing best bitter brewed by Hadrian Border Brewery, called Farne Island.



The Jolly Fisherman, Craster

Exploring Dunstanburgh Castle *en route* the next day we walked to **Seahouses**. Here we visited **The Olde Ship Inn**, a large GBG pub with lots of separate rooms and seating areas, each displaying an array of maritime memorabilia. It is on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors and claims to have "possibly the smallest bar in Britain". A very busy pub, serving eight local cask ales. We tried Northumbrian Gold and Tyneside Blonde, both excellent beers by Hadrian Border Brewery.

Our walk from Seahouses went through **Low Newton**, where we had a lunch of dark beer fruit cake and local cheese at **The Ship**; a microbrewery serving its own cask beers. This GBG pub and Northumberland Pub of the Year 2026, is situated in the corner of a three-sided square of former fishermen's cottages around a green; a picturesque location facing the beach. It



Keith outside The Ship, Low Newton

has been described by *The Sunday Times* as “arguably the nation's best seaside boozer”. We washed down our lunch with Dolly Daydream bitter, and Sea Dog smoked



Dark beer fruit cake and cheese at The Ship, Low Newton

porter. Both were outstanding. Following lunch, we staggered on to Belford, our next overnight stay. In **Belford** we visited **The Black Swan** a GBG pub with two small bars. Here two Rigg & Furrow beers were available, of which we sampled Run Hop Run, a very refreshing, citrusy American pale ale.

The Northumberland Coast Path passes by **Lindisfarne**, and we took a day out from our walk to visit the iconic Holy Island. Whilst there we tried some ales at two of the island's pubs. **The Ship Inn** is a GBG pub, serving three cask ales, a house beer brewed by Hadrian Borders, and two changing, which on this occasion were also brewed by Hadrian Borders. The large pub interior has wood panelled walls adorned with artefacts of life at sea in bygone days and various photographs and paintings portraying a history of island life. We enjoyed the house beer, Holy Island Blessed Bitter. The other pub, **The Crown and Anchor** has a cosy bar with a Gothic carving of a local monk in the corner.

The priory ruins are at the rear of the pub, and the beer garden has views to Lindisfarne Castle. Again, three cask ales were available, all from Northumberland breweries. We drank Houndstooth, a classic malty best bitter from Rigg & Furrow, and Equinox an award-winning English pale ale by First and Last. Both were excellent.

We completed our walk in the historic border town of **Berwick-upon-Tweed**. Here, **The Pilot Inn** is the most northerly GBG pub in England and possibly the most northerly pub. A stone built end-terrace building dating from the 19th century, it has a regionally important historic interior retaining the original small room layout and boasting several nautical artefacts over 100 years old.

It is very much a friendly locals pub. Three cask ales were on offer. We enjoyed Midas a session golden ale brewed by North Pier Brew Co. and Louder than Words a pale ale brewed by Stewart Brewing (a portion of the proceeds from this beer go to the National Deaf Children's Society). Finally, we visited **Atelier** a bistro bar serving both cask ale and Belgian beers (bottle and draught). We sampled two of the cask ales: North Pier's Midas and XPA a session hazy extra pale ale from Stewart Brewing.



Main bar of The Pilot Inn, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Walking the Northumberland Coast Path provided not only fantastic scenery and historic locations, but some excellent local beers served in varied and interesting locations.

Keith and Jane Foster

ON THE BUSES

Beautifully warm sunny weather at the start of May saw four adventurers contend with the annual disruption caused by the city's mayor-making celebrations, but this year with considerably better organisation and information provision on the part of Salisbury Reds. Finding the correct pick-up point was easy, but getting everybody out of the very convenient cafe and onto the bus before it departed proved more of a challenge. So up the Chalke Valley we went on the well-travelled 29 route, which passes no less than nine pubs on its journey from Salisbury to Shaftesbury. We were greeted with enthusiasm by the landlord at the White Hart, **Bishopstone**, who was uncannily able to identify us as CAMRA members at first glance. Three ales were on offer - Butcombe Original, Sharp's Coaster and the favourite, Great Bustard from Stonehenge. Lunch was enjoyed in the garden. Outside seating was also our preference at the Talbot in **Berwick St John**, our next stop further up the valley, firstly having summoned the iron will necessary to avoid the temptation of bailing out *en route* at the ever wonderful Horseshoe. Palmer's 200 was the beer of choice at the Talbot, with the alternative being Hop Back Fugglestone masquerading as the house bitter.

At the end of May our trip took place during a blistering heatwave but the bus driver kept up a cracking pace through the country lanes ensuring a constant breeze within. At the Greater Good, **Fovant**, a Woodshedding ale had just run out and we also managed to finish the Butcombe Original, but a new cask of that was quickly put on, followed by Crop Circle. We continued on our way to The Boot in **Tisbury**, where they had very kindly agreed to stay open for us, offering a choice of Butcombe Rare Breed, Glastonbury Hedge Monkey and Dartmoor Legend, all dispensed by gravity from the casks behind the

bar. Then down the hill for the Benett Arms where the offering was Butcombe Gold, and finally the train home.

Owing to the dangerous heat wave, our annual pilgrimage to the **Banks Arms, Studland** was postponed for a week - and for once we did not get rained on whilst on the open-top bus. Five of use who arrived by various means including bicycle, train and bus enjoyed a splendid array of ales including Joustier, White Knight and the rather unusual Pan-Asian Pale from Goff's, with Wrecked, Fossil Fuel and the stand-out favourite Summer Glow, all from their own Isle of Purbeck Brewery. As usual the food was gorgeous, to match the perfect weather.



Adventurers outside the Banks Arms, Studland

Later that same week a total of four made their way variously by some combination of train, bus and car to the much-loved Three Daggers Brewery, Pub, Restaurant, Cafe and Farm Shop at **Edington**, where four of their own ales - Daggers Ale, EPA, Tinhead and Endless Summer were available, accompanied by a choice of amazing fresh salads from the farm shop, pizzas from the food truck and a variety of food from the restaurant. Those of a stronger constitution then made their way to the Horse & Groom in **Westbury** which offered Maiden Voyage and Bonville Pale from Hop Union, Three Lions and 3/6 (that's Three and Sixpence

for our younger members) from Twisted, with Snail Creep Hanging from Stone Daisy.



A good turnout for The King's Head, Whiteparish

A much larger group of 10 converged on the always excellent King's Head at **Whiteparish**, following an unusually comfortable journey owing to the new electric bus, a rare sight on the X7 route. At the pub we found Hop Back Citra, St Austell Proper Job and Flack's Double Drop. As usual the food was wonderful, because the pub employs real chefs. The pace of the meal being somewhat leisurely, we had to opt for a later bus - which turned out to be the same vehicle - to take us back to the Green Dragon at **Alderbury**, where we found Timothy Taylor Golden Best and, once again, Proper Job. We also found a huge garden with great views and it was an altogether very enjoyable trip.

Andrew Ward

Barrel Organ

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PUB NEWS

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

Following last issue's theme of encouraging pub openings, we have more activity in Salisbury. The former **Chough** premises (latterly Dancing Moose and also Bill's) has been acquired by the Chickpea group who have applied for planning permission to do what is needed to restore the property to its former glory as a public house. Elsewhere in the city, work has now begun to transform **The Cathedral Hotel** into a high-end destination with fine-dining restaurant and a rooftop bar with panoramic views across the city.

Daliz clothing have moved their store from Winchester Street into former medieval escape rooms in the Cross Keys Arcade. They have a large space upstairs, **Daliz Attic**, where they host live music and DJ's and serve Dark Revolution beers and other refreshments at their bar. It is fast becoming the place to be!! The team at **The Bell and Crown** have negotiated with Stonegate for a rebrand and are planning a more Irish bar feel and a return to **The Cloisters**.

The Taste the World Group were finally due to exchange contracts with **The Bridge Tap** on 20 August and then spend around six weeks transforming the place into a late-night games, karaoke and sports establishment called **Bill's Bar**. The switch from the Salisbury Arms on Endless Street to Tinga's former premises on Salt Lane is now complete and the new **Jimmy Goose's Bar and Kitchen** is fully open and continuing as before. Meanwhile, the **Salisbury Arms - Endless Street Tap** is making its mark under the new ownership of Georgie and Hannah of Bramble Pubs. The biggest news is that for the first time in years the pub is actually serving real ale again!!

Deacons, Fisherton Street is now under new management following the departure of Benny and Matt in mid-June. Salisbury City Council's summer installation, **Fayre on the Square** is back on the Guildhall Square with the bar again being run by Columbia Events. It is open every day until 6 September.

The Boot at Berwick St. James has celebrated its first anniversary and has been nominated for an Asset of Community Value. Unfortunately the landlord has issued a statement saying that he has surrendered his lease and will be working with Red Oak Taverns to ensure a smooth transition to the next landlord or lady. **The Antrobus Arms Hotel** in Amesbury has had new owners since 1 June and managers Gary and Michelle are being kept on. **The King's Arms** at Amesbury has new management under the same owner. Following 249 objections, the owner of **The Forester**, Donhead St. Andrew has had the 'change of use to single dwelling' planning application refused. In addition to the Asset of Community Value nomination, The Donheads Community Benefit Society has come forward to consider ownership and has already gathered good support.

Zoe Guild, landlady of the Doghouse Dorset in Gillingham and new owner of **The South Western** at Tisbury has been refurbishing the place and, as reported last issue, had hoped to be opening early summer. However, she seems to be encountering a few setbacks. The Doghouse is one of only eight Michelin-accredited restaurants in Dorset. **Porton Local - The Old Railway Hotel** had reopened under the new management of short-term tenants and at the end of June was put up for sale. They are continuing to trade as usual until a buyer can be found. The For Sale sign has been taken down at

The Swan, Stoford... plenty of speculation as to what may or may not be happening!! After five years Jo and Tony have handed back their keys and **The King's Head** at Redlynch is currently closed and sadly Jess and Laurie have closed **The Greater Good** at Fovant. I am not yet aware of future plans for either pub.

And finally, congratulations to **Twisted Barrel**, the unusual upstairs bar at The Bell and Crown, for making the finals of the Best Bar category of the Muddy Stilletos Wiltshire Awards.

Sue Turner
Pubs Officer

CIDER-LOVERS FROM ALL OVER THE UK FLOCK TO THE CUCKOO AS IT WINS MAJOR TROPHY

The Cuckoo Inn at Hamptworth has been chosen as the best cider pub across a huge area of southern England by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) and will now go forward to the national championships to be decided later this year. Greek-born landlord Nik Amplianitis, who admits he knew very little about cider when he took over the pub, near Salisbury, four years ago, said that he is "over the moon" at becoming CAMRA's South Central Region Cider Pub of the Year.



Nik Amplianitis (centre), landlord of The Cuckoo Inn, receiving his award certificates from Norman Clinnick (left), Regional Director of CAMRA, and Jane Foster (right), Cider Champion of the Salisbury and South Wilts branch.

Photo: Roger Braddick

He was presented with his regional winner's certificate and Wiltshire county certificates for two years running by Norman Clinnick, Regional Director of CAMRA, and Jane Foster, Cider Champion of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch, at the 150 year-old pub on the outskirts

of the New Forest. CAMRA's South Central Region covers the four mainland counties of Wiltshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, and Dorset plus the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands.

Since taking over in 2022, when The Cuckoo stocked only four ciders, Nik has turned it into a destination pub for cider-lovers from all over the United Kingdom and Ireland. "I have one couple who come all the way down from Scotland, others from Wales and Ireland," he said. "We have established quite a reputation and winning this regional CAMRA trophy is a huge help for us"

"I am from Greece and we don't really do cider there," added Nik. "I initially said that we are going to have 14 ciders and everybody said I was mad. Now we have increased the number of still ciders from 25 to 45 and we also have zero alcohol ciders. What I want to do is embrace the whole cider world covering all types."

Jane Foster said: "I became the Cider Champion of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA in 2022 and started visiting our local pubs that served cider. The Cuckoo really stood out above the rest serving a wide range of real ciders and perry. It won our branch Cider Pub of the Year award in 2023 and has repeated this three times since then as well as winning the county trophy. Nik truly deserves this recognition."

Will Bennett

SINGING FOR JOY WITH ASTA

Pubs have always been associated with singing whether it be football chants, Christmas carols or charity fundraising. But Asta Hodgson's Sing#Inn in Salisbury pubs is different. It is about the sheer joy of singing, the sense of relaxation that comes from letting go of your inhibitions. The positive news is that you don't have to be any good at singing. The even better news is that it does involve having a drink.



Asta Hodgson with her keyboard

Asta, a professional music teacher, has been running Sing#Inn in pubs such as The George & Dragon in Castle Street, Deacons in Fisherton Street and The Winchester Gate in Rampart Road for the past few months. The formula is simple. She turns up with her keyboard, the punters arrive

clutching a glass of something, there are some warm-up exercises guaranteed to relax both muscles and inhibitions and then the singing starts.

Each event has a theme. One was based on St Patrick's Day – cue 'Whisky in the Jar', another at The George & Dragon, one of Salisbury's riverside pubs, was based around river songs while a third had a walking theme. Asta had just taken part in the Clarendon Walk in aid of Cancer Research and so wore her charity pink shirt and baseball cap.

"The concept is essentially a 'pop up pub choir'," said Asta. "The point is to deliver a participatory



Singing along in Deacons



Smiles all round



Asta at the George & Dragon

musical community experience whilst enjoying a tippie in different pubs. This is great for community, well-being, and pub revenue - all of which are needed!"

Asta is a musician and teacher, who started out on the cello but now also plays the keyboard



Warm-up exercises at The George & Dragon

and the ukulele. She grew up in Surrey and later worked overseas for 14 years in some highly unusual places - Russia, Myanmar, and Malaysia. She came to Salisbury last year because she has family in the area.

She is teaching early years (children aged 3-6) music classes at Salisbury Arts Centre and also works in care homes. She said: "I wanted to have a bit more variety and to do more community stuff. So I thought that if you hold one in a pub what could go wrong. Sing#Inn is a pub choir concept that was developed in Australia. I thought that the idea was fabulous. I say to people that I am asking you to sing. I am not asking you to be good at it. It is not a secret talent."

The next Sing#Inn is at The George & Dragon at 7pm on Wednesday 23 September. The event after that is on Tuesday 20 October at The Winchester Gate. Tickets are £7.50. No experience is necessary. You can follow Asta on Facebook and Instagram at [astaplays.uk](https://www.instagram.com/astaplays.uk).

Will Bennett

CAMRA MEMBERS OPT IN TO STAY INFORMED

Are you a Salisbury and South Wilts CAMRA member who would like to be kept updated on our social and branch events? To keep informed you may need to **opt in** to our communications - and this is a simple task.

- Login to your CAMRA personal account <https://www.camra.org.uk/> and sign in using your membership number and password - use the **Create Account** option if it is your first time.
- Click on the symbol with your initials on the top right and select **My Profile**

- Now select **Marketing Preferences**
- Switch on **Email** and **Branch** - this gives us permission to send our monthly news emails.
- You can also switch on other options at this point
- Finally click on **Save** in the bottom right-hand corner.

We keep our communications brief but informative. We have lots of enjoyable social events and would love to extend a welcome.

REMINDER: NEW BARREL ORGAN SHORT STORY COMPETITION

'THE ALE THAT GOT AWAY!'

You are reminded that Barrel Organ is holding another short story competition, similar to the ones we ran in 2019/2020 and again in 2023. This time we are providing you with the title of your story, **'The Ale That Got Away!'**. It is up to you to construct a story around this title and theme.

Deadline: 30 September 2026.

Maximum length: 1000 words. Single letter words and numbers count as a word.

Title: 'The Ale That Got Away!'

Format: MS Word or compatible (NOT pdf or Apple Pages).

Send to: Send your entry, as an email attachment, to willbennett1950@gmail.com

Filename: Please ensure your story's filename contains your name or initials.

Prizes: The winner and runner-up will receive beer-related prizes.

Your story must **not** have been previously published. It remains the copyright of the author but must not appear in any other publication until the results are announced and published in *Barrel Organ*. The entries will be judged by local Wiltshire/Dorset author Michael Hambling, a CAMRA member. The decision of the judge is final. You can use your real name or a pen-name and only the editor will know who you are until the winners are announced.

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DIARY DATES *Salisbury & South Wiltshire*

SEPTEMBER

2nd: Open Branch Meeting.

7.30pm The Wyndham Arms, Estcourt Road, Salisbury.

5th: Bus and Train Social

To Romsey. Depart X7R bus from Stop D, Endless Street, Salisbury 11.40am. Arrive Romsey 12.25pm. Visit Three Tuns, plus town pub, plus Flacks Taproom (opens 2.00pm). Return to Salisbury by train.

11th: Minibus Trip

6.30pm pickup Salisbury coach park. Downton Brewery Tap; The Goat, Downton; The Radnor Arms, Nunton.

16th: Amesbury Amble

7.30pm start at The Bell, followed by The Antrobus Arms, The New Inn, and The George Hotel, all Amesbury.

23rd: Train Social

To The Digby Tap, Sherborne. Train departs Salisbury 10.47am, arrives Sherborne 11.32am. Please email ptc@salisburycamra.org.uk with at least one week's notice if you would like to be included in the lunch booking. Return train journey 2.35pm from Sherborne, arrives Salisbury 3.19pm.

OCTOBER

7th: Open Branch Meeting.

7.30pm The Pheasant, Salt Lane, Salisbury

10th: Bus Social

To Marlborough and Enford. Depart 10.25am on X5 bus from Stop M, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury, arrive Marlborough 11.54am. Wellington Arms (free house). Depart 1.17pm on X5 bus to Enford, arriving 2.00pm. The Swan, Enford. Depart on X5 at 4.00pm.

16th: Minibus Trip

6.30pm pickup Salisbury coach park. The Old Railway Inn, Porton; The Lord Nelson, Winterslow; The Hook & Glove, Farley.

21st: City Saunter

7.30pm start at The Royal George, Bedwin St; then The Salisbury Arms, Endless St; The George & Dragon and Qudos, both Castle Street; all Salisbury.

29th: Bus Social

To Ringwood. Depart 11.10am on X3 bus from Stop N, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury. Arrive Meeting House Lane, Ringwood 11.53am. Visit The Inn on the Furlong for lunch, followed by The Star Inn and then The Railway Inn. X3 departs from Ringwood at approximately 04 and 34 minutes past the hour, arriving in Salisbury about 40 minutes later.

NOVEMBER

5th: Open Branch Meeting

7.30pm The Duck, Laverstock.

7th: Bus Social

To Ebbesbourne Wake and Coombe Bissett. Depart 11.50am on 29 bus from Stop N, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury. Arrive The Horseshoe, Ebbesbourne Wake 12.42pm. Leave on 29 bus 1.56pm. Arrive Fox & Goose, Coombe Bissett 2.23pm. Leave Fox & Goose 4.01pm, arrive Salisbury 4.11pm.

13th: Minibus Trip

6.30pm pickup Salisbury coach park. The Winterbourne Arms, Winterbourne Dauntsey; The Crown Inn, Cholderton; The Malet Arms, Newton Tony.

18th: City Saunter

7.30pm Coach & Horses, Winchester Street; The Five Bells and The Pheasant, both Salt Lane; all Salisbury.

25th: Train Social

To Bath. Depart Salisbury on the 10.42am train, arriving Bath 11.36am. The many excellent pubs in Bath include The Coeur de Lion, The Lamb & Lion and The Black Fox. Return on the 3.37pm arriving Salisbury 4.37pm.

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

*Please check all bus and train times
due to changing timetables For buses see Salisbury Reds
website www.salisburyreds.co.uk*

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