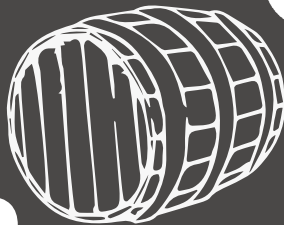


Barrel Organ



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

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

December 2023 - February 2024

FOLLOWING IN HER FAMILY'S FOOTSTEPS

FREE
Please
take one



IN THIS ISSUE

WINTERFEST MOVES TO
THE GUILDHALL
BUS AND RAIL TRIPS FOR
PUB-GOERS
LOCAL BREWERY AND
PUB NEWS

Plus much more...



HOOK & GLOVE at Farley



01722 712247

Dog friendly Country Pub

3/4 Real Ales

Food 12 - 9 every day
except Sun 12-3

Bookings recommended

The Street Farley, Salisbury SP5 1AB

PAPER RED MEDIA

Would you like to advertise in the next edition?

Pre-book your space by contacting us below

We provide advertising & design for a variety
of CAMRA branch magazines around the Country

Contact us for details on our competitive rates or if you are
interested in us designing and publishing a magazine for you

Paper Red Media

Tel: 01536 358670

Email/s: papperredmedia@outlook.com

n.richards@btinternet.com

Web: www.papperredmedia.weebly.com

Contact us
via QR code



FROM THE EDITORS

Louise Penny, pictured on the front cover of this issue of *Barrel Organ*, once vowed that she would never run another pub unless The Radnor Arms in Nunton, near Salisbury, became available. Sure enough the much-loved village hostelry, once run by her parents and where she spent her childhood, needed a new landlady and she is now in charge. She has known some of her regulars all her life and they remember her childhood misdemeanours. It is the sort of mutual familiarity that makes for a great local. Read about it in 'Meet the Governors'.

Winterfest, Salisbury's popular winter beer festival, is switching to a new, much warmer, location. It is marking its silver 25th edition by moving to the municipal magnificence of The Guildhall in Salisbury's Market Square. The dates will be later than in recent years – 16 and 17 February – but the range and quality of real ales and ciders and the relaxed, conversation-led atmosphere, will remain the same.

Public transport remains a great way to visit pubs where it has survived the infamous Dr Beeching's 1960s butchery of the railways and other more recent cutbacks. CAMRA nationally has relaunched its Public Transport Advisory Group. In response, the Salisbury and South Wiltshire branch now has a team of Public Transport Officers to organise and promote bus and train trips, guides and services in and around our area. Cheap, free for some, very sociable and, of course, avoiding the dangers posed by drink driving, it simply makes sense. More details of the CAMRA initiative are in this issue of *Barrel Organ*.

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: Bruce Springett
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 such as Salisbury railway station.

EDITORS

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

The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten contributions for publication. All editorial copyright © Salisbury CAMRA 2023. Views expressed in this publication are those of their individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, branch committee or the Campaign for Real Ale nationally. Salisbury CAMRA accepts no liability in relation to the accuracy of advertisements; readers must rely on their own enquiries. It should also be noted that acceptance of an advertisement in this publication should not be deemed an endorsement of quality by Salisbury CAMRA.

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

The Radnor Arms, Nunton

Longstanding customers at The Radnor Arms in Nunton sometimes remind the landlady Louise Penny about her childhood misdemeanours. It is a sign not only of the Radnor's ability to inspire loyalty from clients down the decades but also of Louise's lifelong association with this charming village pub three miles south of Salisbury.



*Landlady Louise Penny behind the bar of
The Radnor Arms*

When Louise was born her father Richard and mother Lesley were already running The Radnor and stayed there until 1999. So she spent her childhood at the pub, living over the bar, doing her first shift as a waitress aged just 11, and, even if she did not initially realise it, picking up vital information about being a successful landlady. Louise's pub education was completed when her parents moved to The Rainbow at Steeple Langford, which she ran for five years after her mother became terminally ill.

"After my dad sold The Rainbow in 2016 I vowed that I would never run a pub again," said Louise. "The only exception that I would make to that would be to run this one if it became available." The following year she then licensee of The Radnor, Jason Schinkel, was looking for a manager and was tipped off by a local about Louise's possible availability. She took the job,

Jason let her get on with it before then moving on to pastures new and in 2021 she took on his 20-year lease of the free house from the owners, Lord Radnor's Longford Estate.



Real ales are important at The Radnor Arms

"It was like coming home, it was very strange," said Louise. "Perhaps the strangest thing was not just moving back into the family home but finding that the clientele had not changed. I have now realised that actually probably it is my calling in life but it took time to accept that. I love Nunton, you have got such a great community here, such a good mix of people."

The past six years, first as manager and now as licensee, have not been an easy ride even for someone such as Louise who has been in the pub business for much of her life. The Covid-19 pandemic, when hospitality venues were closed by Government decree, produced formidable challenges for anyone running a pub. Louise survived it by being quick to adapt and seizing on every possible opportunity to bring in revenue allowed by the regulations.

One of these was being able to put up marquees in the garden where customers could eat and drink. One lasting legacy of Covid is that the marquees are still there at The Radnor and that many people prefer to eat outside in them. This is

partly because this has become a lifestyle change but also because some are still nervous about dining inside. This has massively increased the numbers of customers that the pub can cope with and on a typical Sunday lunchtime 240 people will eat at The Radnor with three chefs working flat out. Even pandemics can have an upside.



Louise Penny outside the charming pub in Nunton

Louise says that business at The Radnor, originally an 18th century cottage and then a pub since the mid-19th century, is better now than it was before Covid with food normally bringing in 60% of the revenue and drinks 40%. On a busy Friday evening when people are celebrating the arrival of the weekend that proportion can shift to about 50/50.

Real ale is a key part of The Radnor's business and Louise has earned the pub a regular place in the annual *Good Beer Guide* published by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). She almost always has four real ales available with a strong preference for local breweries such as Stone Daisy, Rude Giant, Hop Back, Downton Brewery and Gritchie. On the day that *Barrel Organ* visited offerings included Downton's 20th anniversary IPA Opening Score at 4.5% ABV and Stone Daisy's Snail Creep Hanging best bitter at 4.2%

"Local breweries are important to me and we are very lucky to have good local ones here," said Louise. "It's important to keep the ales in good condition and I clean the lines after every barrel." A sense of continuity and history pervades The Radnor. This is partly down to the Penny family

and as *Barrel Organ* arrived to interview Louise she was on the phone to her father to get his advice about roasting an entire hog for a large gathering and he is also useful when she has what she calls "cellar questions". But it goes back much further than that as an excellent short history written by Michael Pearce in the mid-1990s, supported by Richard and Lesley Penny, shows.

In addition to this, an extraordinary document headed 'The Radnor Arms, A Thousand Years of History' is on the wall of the bar. It details how the land on which the pub now stands was granted to the Lords of the Manor of Downton by 1066, the year that William the Conqueror successfully invaded England. It goes on to list every landlord and landlady who have pulled pints there since Anne Newham began to sell beer in 1853. Originally it was named after its licensees – Newham's and then Haskell's – but became The Radnor Arms in 1919.



The interior of the bar at The Radnor

A foreword to Pearce's history of The Radnor approvingly quotes the 18th century writer Samuel Johnson who said that "there is nothing that has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn". It is a sentiment that is still just as valid today.

Will Bennett

BREWERY NEWS

Dark Revolution

Dark Revolution Brewery continues to build nationwide brand momentum. It has featured on several high-profile beer podcasts as well as attending the Indy Man Beer Convention in October; an invitation-only beer festival held at the famous Victoria Baths in Manchester. Dark Revolution beer has been featured alongside some of the best breweries in the country.

Internationally Dark Revolution beers can not only be found in Switzerland, Italy and Holland but it is now also exporting to Norway. Cunard Cruise Ships house beers are brewed at its brewery in Old Sarum, Salisbury.

In the last 12 months the brewery has produced 44 new beers. The variety of these has been diverse – bringing out its very first 5.2% ABV Extra Special Bitter called ‘Where’s My Dog’, which has been scoring highly on the Untappd website. Keeping its sights focused on increasing its portfolio of brews, Dark Revolution is looking to produce 70 new beers next year which will include sour beers. To keep up with demand, the brewery staff is now made up of three full-time members with plans to move the brewery to a larger building across the road in early 2024.

Rude Giant

The big news from south Wiltshire’s new brewery Rude Giant Brew Co is that it has taken over the premises vacated by Brown Street Entertainment in Salisbury, which has become its tap room. Renamed the Rude Giant Beer House, the premises underwent a high speed revamp before re-opening in early October. Adam Batchelor, who managed Brown Street Entertainment on behalf of the Newbery family, is continuing in the same role with Rude Giant and the wonky front door has also survived regime change. However the iron gates that were just inside the front door have gone as has the eye-catching outside mural. The latter has been replaced by an almost equally

startling piece of artwork in Rude Giant’s green and white colours.

The aim is to promote the Rude Giant brand and, of course, to sell its beers, which include two cask ales – Rude Best at 3.9% ABV and Rude Pale at 3.6% ABV.

Sixpenny Brewery

Congratulations to the Sixpenny Tap for its sixth consecutive entry in CAMRA’s *Good Beer Guide* (2024 edition) since the brewery’s move from Sixpenny Handley to Cranborne in 2017. Other good news is that Scott Wayland, the owner and head brewer, has recovered from his motorbike accident in June and is now back working full time. The regular beers (Best, Gold, IPA) and the winter special, Sixpenny Black (4.2% ABV), are currently available well into the New Year.

As in previous years, the Sixpenny Tap hosted the Big Curry Lunch in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund on Remembrance Day Sunday, 12 November, with a full house of 100 diners as usual. From the beginning of November, the tap introduced ‘Happyspoons’ (i.e. Happy Hours) on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays 6–8pm with beer at half price. Also, the four pint takeaways have been reduced to £10. Currently, there are good deals on casks and Christmas offers through December.

The popular Open Mics continue fortnightly on Saturdays at the tap, sometimes with music groups. From 4 November, Thai curries became available 5–7pm at the music sessions. The brewery will be holding a Christmas Open Day on Saturday 23 December, supported by live music from 1 to 3pm (classic James Bond Theme Tunes along with Christmas Carols). Merry Christmas from Sixpenny.

Bat Country

Brothers Ned and Tom continue to brew at their East Wellow base, near Romsey. Coming soon is

their New Zealand pale, Lionel's Lawnmower. They have decided to change the hops with each version of ale. The new version will be hopped with Nelson Sauvin, Motueka and Riwaka. In the pipeline will be a batch of their milk stout, Monster of the Weak, however there is no firm date for this.

Their beers featured at the Craft Beer South event in Southampton together with beers from the south coast and beyond. They thanked everyone who said hello and for the nice feedback they received. 'As a youngish brewery it was great to get this'. They also featured recently in the Indie Beer Week, Southampton with Steam Town, Eastleigh featuring their beer. Another example of this brewery making waves in the local beer scene.

Stonehenge Ales

2023 has been a busy and successful year for Stonehenge Ales as James and Nicola Robinson have really kicked on with their project. The reception from drinkers for their new beer Pillars of Pale was particularly pleasing and it will reappear in 2024. The programme of seasonal beers will continue with ever popular Rudolph, a strong fruity bitter rolled out now, to be followed by Old Smokey, the handsome dark porter with a rich roasted malt flavour from January.

Next year will see some slight revamping of brewery materials and information, with more material for pubs to display, one of which celebrates the lovely old building that is Netheravon Mill and the fact that brewing started there 40 years ago. This will be marked by a number of events in 2024 - more information will follow. More things are planned in what promises to be an exciting year for the brewery. Keep an eye on *Barrel Organ* for further details as events unfold.

Downton Brewery

Downton Brewery launched its 20th anniversary beer during September. Called Opening Score (4.5% ABV) it was a pale hoppy brew and proved very popular in the tap room. A German

beer festival was held at the brewery on the last Friday of September with staff and some customers donning traditional German costumes such as Lederhosen. Forthcoming specials include an Oatmeal Stout for November, and a new beer containing sloes called 'Let it Sloe' for December. Further specials are also planned to celebrate the major sporting events next year (e.g. Six Nations Rugby, Olympic Games and Euro 24). The brewery will have a stall again at this year's Winchester Christmas Market and it is hoped to start opening the tap room on some Saturdays for private functions.

Hop Back

Over the summer Hop Back has returned to processing and bottling its flagship beer Summer Lightning (5% ABV) on site. Once again it can be considered a live beer along with all Hop Back's other bottled beers which are matured in a conditioning room situated over the bottling plant. Also conditioned on site is a new Christmas Ale called Rudolf's Revenge. This is a special edition barrel-aged beer that has rich aromas of Christmas pudding alongside notes of oak and whisky. There are flavours of dates and spices against the backdrop of malt and barrel. Deceptively easy drinking for its strength, this beer has been "trapped in a barrel and is now out for revenge!"

Along with its core beers the first few special brews for 2024 will be the regular Winter Lightning (5.5% ABV) for January and Hooking Good (4% ABV) for February. A welcome return is planned for March with Jamie Ferguson, the head brewer, bringing back Ginger Stout, a warming velvety black beer that has not been brewed for 14 years.

The brewery is also going through the process of acquiring the Albion in Winchester which will bring its pub estate to ten premises.

Contributors in order: *Sarah Hughes, Will Bennett, Derek Ellis, Peter Olding, Gerald Gibson, Nigel Allison and John Hinton*

HOP BACK AND DOWNTON BREWERIES TOUR



*CAMRA and CMIC members outside the
Downton Brewery Tap*



*Hop Back head brewer Jamie Ferguson (right)
explains their operation*

"I think I will be dreaming of this tour for years to come!" said one attendee.

We were delighted to organise a joint visit on a sunny autumnal Saturday afternoon by the Salisbury and South Wiltshire branch of CAMRA and the CAMRA Members Investment Club (CMIC) to the Hop Back Brewery (in which CMIC is a major investor) and the Downton Brewery, which are both located on the Downton Industrial Estate near Salisbury.



*Martin Strawbridge, head brewer at
Downton Brewery, fielding questions*



Pins of Hop Back beers awaiting tasting

A band of beer-loving members from across the south of England and South Wiltshire convened at the new Downton Brewery Tap for their complimentary welcome drinks before setting out on separate tours of Hop Back and Downton breweries. At Hop Back a full range of their core beers were set out in racked pins for further complimentary tastings – two further Hop Back pins, one containing the new seasonal Green Hopped beer, were also available back at the Tap. The core range of Downton beers

were also available at the Tap for complimentary tastings.



Downton Brewery has produced many great beers

Head brewers Jamie Ferguson (Hop Back) and Martin Strawbridge (Downton) gave fascinating insights into their beers, tours of the breweries, and fielded numerous questions from attendees.

Brewing royalty John Gilbert and Steve Wright, the former head brewers of Hop Back, were also on hand back at the Tap.

We were made extremely welcome and everyone enjoyed tasting outstanding beers in supreme condition, good company and conversation. The hospitality was indeed exceptional: we had originally expected a pay bar but were delighted to be provided with beer and to have the closing time extended by an additional 45 minutes to 4.45pm! Our thanks to all the brewery staff who turned out on their weekend and to the various in-laws and babysitters who allowed that to happen.

I think I might be dreaming of this tour for a while too.

Neil Beagrie

THE DUKE OF YORK

- A TRADITIONAL PUB -

A traditional locals' pub offering 7 ever changing, reasonably priced cask ales and traditional cider.

20p off pint for CAMRA members



Open Every Evening

Open Every Day from 12 noon

Serving Rolls and Hot Pies

The Duke of York | 34 York Road | Salisbury | SP2 7AS

CAMRA PROMOTES BUS TRIPS FOR PUB VISITS

CAMRA has re-launched its Public Transport Advisory Group. In response, the Salisbury and South Wiltshire branch now has a team of Public Transport Officers to organise and promote bus and train trips, guides and services in and around our area. We also need your help – details at the end of this feature. For the latest news on public transport, see the branch website, and keep an eye out for the monthly member emails.



Many bus services leave from Blue Boar Row, Salisbury.
Photo: Salisbury Reds

Bus Socials

The Branch social calendar now includes day-time pub excursions. These generally depart from Salisbury late morning, and then visit one pub for lunch. You then proceed to another couple of nearby pubs – sometimes involving additional bus journeys – with various options to either extend the trip or return early.

If you can, it helps to notify your intention to come in advance, so enough places can be booked for lunch – details are given in the monthly emails. There will usually be a couple of bus socials each month – one at a weekend and one on a weekday – but there might occasionally be a train trip thrown in. Keep an eye on the branch website or the monthly member email.

Bus Fares

The £2 cap on single bus fares has been extended by Salisbury Reds to at least the end of 2023. This means return travel to places as far as Southampton, Bournemouth, Andover and Swindon will cost you only £4. There are plenty of pubs on these routes, and some of them do not see branch members very often. Do visit, and make yourself known. Note that sometimes the fare will be less than £2 – so do check. And of course if you are eligible for a concessionary pass, bus travel is free (for Wiltshire residents, after 0930).



The Wyndham Arms, Salisbury has a bus stop right outside. Photo: Andrew Ward

Buses in our Area

Bus routes around Salisbury are operated by GoSouthCoast under the Salisbury Reds brand. There is a range of routes long and short. These include local runs around the city, several buses that serve the Park and Rides, and numerous longer distance journeys radiating out from Salisbury to cities, towns and villages, large and small.

Buses today carry equipment that broadcasts their location in real time. Either using the Salisbury Reds app, or another service such as Google Maps or bustimes.org you will know whether you have got time for one more pint.

Search ‘Salisbury Reds’ on the internet for timetables, live bus information, and the app. There is a range of ticket options, but usually with the £2 fare cap it is cheaper just to buy single tickets as you go. For longer journeys, you only need to ‘tap on’ – you will be capped at £2 whether you tap off or not. There is no need to buy a ticket.



One of South Wiltshire’s rural bus services.
Photo: Salisbury Reds

For the pubs in our area, CAMRA’s WhatPub usually includes details of the routes that serve a pub, and the main places on those routes. We continuously check and update this information, and also plan to include vital details such as buses that do not run in evenings or weekends – so do please help out by reporting anything you think might be useful. Some pubs, such as the Wyndham Arms in Salisbury, have stops right outside – and others even have stops named after them.

No Bus Route? No Problem

Not everybody, nor every pub, is on a major bus route, but now there is a range of services under the brand Wiltshire Connect that provide various permutations of flexible and demand-responsive travel in certain areas. Within the Pewsey Vale (see map), you can book an ‘on-demand’ bus via telephone or app, but do check

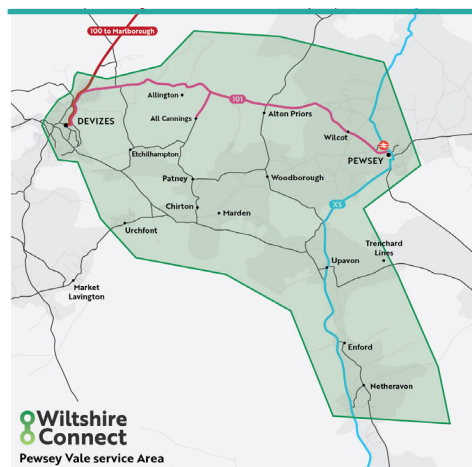
the website for the hours when these run, and how and when to book them. You can use concessionary passes on these services. Pewsey also has a route to Devizes – the 101. This has some timetabled stops, but there are other places the bus can divert to if booked in advance.

And finally, Taxibuzz services operate between Shrewton and Amesbury, and also up and down the Woodford Valley between Amesbury and Salisbury. But some of these only run if someone has booked them in advance – check online for details. For all these services, search ‘Wiltshire Connect’.

Problems with Buses?

As part of its national campaigning on public transport issues, CAMRA needs you to let our branch know if the availability or unreliability of public transport in our area has in any way restricted your ability to go to the pub or CAMRA events. Send full details to ptc@salisburycamra.org.uk Also please report any changes to service patterns, such as reductions in frequency or removal of services, that have caused you difficulties. This will all be consolidated at national level.

Andrew Ward and Pete Matthews



Courtesy Wiltshire Council

PUB NEWS

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

Even though it now has an Asset of Community Value order, **The Black Dog** at Chilmark remains closed and **The Royal Oak** at Great Wishford is also closed again.

The sale of **The Pelican** at Stapleford fell through so the team are happy to continue until another buyer can be found. **The Old Railway Hotel** at Porton now has a new long-term tenant manager, Muhammad Aktaruzzaman, hopefully assuring its future. Look out for a new menu, longer opening hours and live entertainment. **The Grove Arms** at Ludwell has a new manager and he has a keen interest in CAMRA. There is a lot going on at the pub with a new menu, quiz nights, draw nights and entertainment.

The Coach and Horses on Winchester Street, Salisbury opened over the first weekend in October and it is already proving a hit with locals. The pub is heavily doggy-themed and is therefore dog-friendly. **The Rude Giant Beer House** in the old Brown Street premises has completed its makeover, now sporting new artwork on the outside of the building. It promises to bring food for all the family, quiz nights and live music. **The Bell and Crown**, Catherine Street, Salisbury closed at the end of July but was reopened, along with **The Pheasant** on Salt Lane, Salisbury by their new owners the DND Group Limited.

The Silver Plough at Pitton has now reopened following an extensive refurbishment focusing on the bed and breakfast accommodation. The local Chickpea group has made a major investment in the business and work will continue into next year.

The Bell at South Newton has announced its winter opening hours which means it is now closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

The Cathedral Hotel on Milford Street, Salisbury has submitted a planning application for major works to bring it up to a five star hotel complete with a rooftop garden bar. Watch this space.. The Indian restaurant **Elai** is now open in the former Boat House in Salisbury, serving up a Kerala-influenced menu.

And finally, to get into the Christmas spirit, the Immersive Group's **Frost Bar** is back in Salisbury's Market Square until the New Year.

Sue Turner
Pubs Officer

THE CUCKOO INN



☎ : 01794 338461

✉ : nik@cuckooinn.com

📘 The Cuckoo Inn Hamptworth

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

TWENTY SOUTH WILTSHIRE PUBS VOTED INTO THE NEW CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE

Twenty pubs in Salisbury and South Wiltshire have been voted into the 2024 edition of the *Good Beer Guide* published by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). They were selected by local CAMRA members with personal experience of pubs in the South Wiltshire area. They include The Bridge Inn in Upper Woodford and the landlady Lorna Janse van Vuuren was presented with the *Good Beer Guide* certificate by Chris White, chairman of the Salisbury & South Wilts branch of CAMRA.



Local CAMRA chairman Chris White presents Lorna Janse van Vuuren, landlady of The Bridge Inn, Upper Woodford, with her Good Beer Guide certificate.

Photograph: Steve Stringer

“We are delighted to be voted into the *Good Beer Guide* for the first time since we took the pub over,” said Lorna. “We work hard at keeping our

beers well and people come in here and say that they can really taste the difference.”

Lorna and her husband Tom came to the Woodford Valley for a New Year’s Eve party in 1992. They made friends there and continued to return from South Africa for holidays until they eventually made the decision to make the valley their permanent home. Their daughter Emma was instrumental in the decision to take on The Bridge Inn as she had worked there in her gap year and in November 2019 they took over.

Chris White, chairman of the Salisbury & South Wilts branch of CAMRA, said: “We are lucky to have so many good pubs in this area and inclusion in the *Good Beer Guide* is high praise for the very best of them. The Bridge Inn is a wonderful local with well-kept real ales and excellent food.”

The full list of South Wiltshire pubs included can be found in the 2024 edition of the *Good Beer Guide*. It has a superb front cover depicting Eddie, mascot of the heavy metal band Iron Maiden, pulling a pint of real ale. The cover design and a foreword have been contributed by Bruce Dickinson, the band’s lead singer, an avid drinker of real ale. For those worried by the sight of Eddie bursting through the front cover, there is an alternative version without him featuring the recognisable lettering and imagery of previous editions. Both cost £16.99 (£14.99 for CAMRA members).

All versions can be ordered online from CAMRA at: <https://camra.org.uk/the-good-beer-guide-2024/>

Will Bennett

SHORT STORY WINNERS RECEIVE THEIR PRIZES

The winners of *Barrel Organ's* short story competition with the theme 'The Pub with No Name' have been presented with their prizes. First place went to Pete Matthews



Short story competition winner Pete Matthews (left) with James Robinson of Stonehenge Ales

who went on a brewery tour and tasting session at Stonehenge Ales in Netheravon. Pete also received a gift pack of beers. Runner-up Sam Moran went along to the Rai d'Or in Salisbury and was presented with a £25 voucher for food at the pub/Thai restaurant

by owner Simon Wheeler.

Pete's winning entry was published in *Barrel Organ* in September and Sam's story can be read in this issue.



Competition runner-up Sam Moran (right) receives a £25 voucher from Simon Wheeler, owner of the Rai d'Or

Our thanks go to James and Nicola Robinson of Stonehenge Ales and Simon Wheeler at the Rai d'Or for generously donating prizes and local author Michael Hambling, a CAMRA member, for judging the entries. Finally we would like to thank all those who contributed competition entries.

THE PUB WITH NO NAME

I left my car by the side of the road. I say road, it was more like a single lane track crossing a moorland full of foreboding. The car was well and truly dead, and my mobile phone could not get a signal. I was awestruck by the remoteness of the landscape, brush heather and scrubby grassland stretching out across craggy hills. My only chance in this remote spot was to get walking and hope I came across a farmhouse or a cottage. I stuffed my phone into my coat pocket, useless though it was, I felt loath to leave it behind. I grabbed my backpack holding a rain

coat and a bottle of water, locked the car door and started across the moor, following a stony path.

The day was cool, squally showers seemed to bubble up from nowhere and grey, bleak rain clouds scudded across the sky. The landscape looked like a Renaissance oil painting. The wind whipped across my face, bullying me like a petulant child, snagging at my clothes. I must have walked miles. The sun began to dip over the hills and there was a chill in the air.

Coming down a steep rocky incline I noticed a building out on the horizon, nestling in the craggy hillside. In the dim light I could see it was lit up, so it was with some relief that I made my way across the boggy scrubland towards it. As I drew closer I realized that it was in fact a pub. How strange I thought that there should be a pub of all things stuck out here in this desolate place.

I climbed the hill towards it and when I finally reached it I was struck by the fact that it had bars on the windows, and a heavy set door that seemed more in keeping with a castle. Orange light flickered from the windows, barely penetrating the gloom. I put my shoulder to the door and pushed my way inside.

The pub was occupied by a few drinkers, the hum of conversation died as soon as I entered. Immediately I began to feel uncomfortable like a microbe under a microscope. I smiled my friendliest smile and nodded to the room. Turning to the bar, I came face to face with a bearded barman, towering over the pumps like a kind of surly giant. "I wonder if you could help me?" I said. "My car has broken down a few miles back and I cannot get a signal on my phone so wondered if I might use yours to phone for some help?" "Don't have a phone" he grunted, picking up the cloth he was using to polish glasses. I turned to the room: "well someone here must have a phone with a signal". No one answered. "No signal out here" said the barman. "Well is there anywhere, a farmhouse for instance, that has a phone I could use?" "There's the Bleacher place" the barman said, wiping a glass. "It's a fair few miles from here" I looked around, the men in the room stared back at me as though I were an alien. "Will you stay for a drink?" the barman said, holding a glass up to the light. I shrugged, "Okay" I replied. I didn't know if I wanted to stay, it was not an inviting sort of place. "I'll have a pint of that" I said pointing to one of the pumps. "Quadhop," he said. "Good choice" and poured me a pint. The men in the pub went back to their conversations and I began to relax

a bit after a few swigs of beer. I leant on the bar and took the place in. It was a real spit and sawdust kind of pub. Wooden floorboards and a log fire roaring in an old stone fireplace.

As I took in my surroundings, I noticed a strange altar in one corner with a pentagram drawn on the wall in red paint. I took a few more swigs of beer, and asked the barman: "what was that altar for?" Suddenly the bar went silent again. "That's been there for years," he said then snatched my glass from me and poured the beer into the sink. "You best be on your way," he said and I didn't like to argue. I zipped up my coat, shrugged my backpack on and made for the door. "And stick to the path," he said, "It's easy to get lost up here in the dark." I opened the door and stepped out into the night. As I moved out of the light of the pub I noticed there was no sign above the door, the pub had no name.

I had been walking for a while when the mist came in, swirling around me like the wispy fingers of ghosts. I soon realized I had strayed from the path and it dawned on me that I was utterly lost. That was when I heard it, a bloodcurdling howl coming out of the mist. It stopped the blood in my veins. I panicked and ran. Heading into the mist I was suddenly knocked off my feet. Pain bit into my arm, as a beast as large as a huge cat bore down on me. It sank its dripping fangs into my arm as I lay on the ground beating at it with my fist, screaming for help.

I must have blacked out. I came round in hospital. Stitched and bandaged, in pain, I asked the nurse what happened. "You were attacked by a dog, old farmer Bleacher found you, he was up on the moor tending his sheep. He shot the dog. Brought you here." "That was no dog" I said. "Of course it was," said the nurse as she checked my drip. "What about the pub?" I said. "Didn't they hear me? "What pub?" said the nurse. "There is no pub up on the moors".

Sam Moran

WINTERFEST MOVES TO THE GUILDHALL



Winterfest, the popular beer festival held by CAMRA's Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch, returns for its 25th event this time at the Guildhall in the Market Place, Salisbury. After the cold weather experienced last year you will all be pleased to hear that the event is going to be wholly indoors and in the warm!



Winterfest XXV will continue the tradition of a comfortable, conversation-led festival with the possibility of a little acoustic background music and, of course, an excellent range of real ales and ciders. Our thanks to Salisbury artist Fred Fieber for designing the new logo.

The festival will begin on Friday 16 February at 6:30pm through to 11pm and continue on Saturday 17 February from 11am through to 8pm. Tickets cost £9 and include a free glass. For ticket information go to: salisburycamra.org.uk/winterfest

Please make a note in your diary for this unmissable event.

Andrew Hesketh
Festivals Co-ordinator

DIARY DATES *Salisbury & South Wiltshire*



DECEMBER 2023

6th Open Branch Meeting

7.00pm King's Head (Wetherspoons), Bridge Street, Salisbury.

15th City Saunter

6.30pm. Good Beer Guide pubs (details TBC).

JANUARY 2024

3rd Open Branch Meeting

7.30pm Bell & Crown, Catherine Street, Salisbury.

13th New Year Social

Venue and time TBC.

FEBRUARY 2024

7th Open Branch Meeting

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

16th Winterfest session 1

6.30pm to 11.00pm at Salisbury Guildhall.

17th Winterfest session 2

11.00am to 8.00pm at Salisbury Guildhall.

Other dates for minibus trips and City Saunters in January and February to be confirmed.



BURTON-UPON-TRENT
BOOK TICKETS
winter.gbbf.org.uk



**GREAT
BRITISH
BEER
FESTIVAL**

WINTER
15-17 FEB



Campaign
for
Real Ale

Make your Christmas Story a **CAMRA** one

A local is for life not just for Christmas – Give the gift of a CAMRA membership this year and keep your pub's story going.

Membership
prices from
£32.50

They'll receive great benefits, such as **£30 of beer vouchers**, quarterly **BEER magazine**, access to the online news platform **What's Brewing**, partner **benefits and discounts...** just a few perks of joining us.

Buy a gift today
camra.org.uk/xmas



Campaign
for
Real Ale





DOWNTON BREWERY

NEW FOREST



Telephone:

01725 513 313

email: sales@downtonbrewery.com

WWW.DOWNTONBREWERY.COM

A photograph of a male worker operating a red Linde N2 forklift in a large warehouse. The worker is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt, a high-visibility orange safety vest with 'LWC' on it, a black beanie with 'LWC' on it, glasses, and yellow gloves. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The forklift has 'Linde N2' and the number '10' on its front. The warehouse aisle is lined with tall blue metal shelving units filled with various products, including boxes of beer and wine. The lighting is bright and industrial.

LWC

THE UK'S LARGEST INDEPENDENT DRINKS WHOLESALER

We have a wide and varied selection of beers, wines, spirits and soft drinks, along with a designated cask coordinator & wine specialist at every depot.

We pride ourselves on our product range and service.

To find out more about LWC and our product range, please get in touch with us:
01264 586240 | andover@lwc-drinks.co.uk