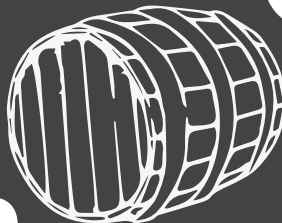


Barrel Organ



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

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

June 2024 - August 2024

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THE CUCKOO SCORES AN AWARDS HAT TRICK

IN THIS ISSUE

SALISBURY SUMMERFEST
PREVIEW

THE COACH & HORSES
RE-OPENS

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF
NETHERAVON BREWING

Plus much more...



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FROM THE EDITORS

CAMRA is as passionate about pubs as it is about pints. So this issue of *Barrel Organ* is delighted to highlight three South Wiltshire pubs which are success stories after going through difficult times – two were closed for years and the third hit a turbulent period when the previous landlord left amid a flurry of newspaper headlines.

The Coach & Horses in Salisbury was closed for nine years after the previous landlord shut the door without even bothering to wash up the glasses. It was widely assumed that it would never reopen but two families – the Aireys who bought it and the Meakers who run it – were determined to save it. Now the Winchester Street pub is up and running, a welcoming local with a good range of beers. It is featured in our regular Meet the Governors slot.

The Cuckoo, on the edge of the New Forest, was shut for two years until the purchasers of the local estate that owns it brought in Nik Amplanitis to re-open it. This summer Nik and his team scooped up all three local CAMRA awards available to it, including Pub of the Year. The Cuckoo narrowly beat the Duke of York in Salisbury, Pub of the Year in 2022 and 2023 and City Pub of the Year again this time. Landlord Jonty Newbery and manager Paul Cooper have done a great job in turning that into a destination pub for real ale lovers.

They and the Coach & Horses have one thing in common – all three are locally-owned free houses not subject to the corporate control of conglomerates focused on screwing every penny out of landlords. They deserve our support.

Kathy, Will & 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 Coach & Horses, Salisbury



The exterior of the Coach & Horses

When the new owners of the Coach & Horses in Salisbury opened the front door for the first time they were confronted by a scene which might have come from a horror movie. Pint glasses were on tables exactly where they had been left by the drinkers who had last used them nine years previously. A thick layer of dust covered everything, a plant had grown out of a gutter and it was impossible to open the back door into the courtyard. "It was like somebody had had a party and then just left," recalled Christian Airey, whose family has bought the historic coaching inn in Winchester Street.



The dog board' at the Coach & Horses

Today you would never know that the Coach & Horses had been left to rot for nine years. It is fully restored, spotlessly clean, light, airy and welcoming. What a difference a year and a considerable injection of money takes. Yet curiously the pub, parts of which date from the late 15th or early 16th

centuries, is run by the same landlords who were there for many years prior to its closure.

Chris and Theresa Meaker ran the Coach & Horses, which was then owned by the giant Heineken corporation, from 2001 to 2014. But the rent became too high, making a living from it was an increasing struggle and they decided to leave for pastures new. A new landlord took over briefly in 2014 but evidently came to the same conclusion as he left abruptly, shutting the doors behind him and leaving the pint glasses on the tables unwashed. The pub remained empty for almost a decade, attracting occasional interest from property developers, who shied away when they discovered planning restrictions attached to the building.



Christian Airey (left) and Chris Meaker behind the bar of the Coach & Horses

It was when the Meakers began talking to Christian Airey, his parents Matthew and Pauline and sister Jodie that a plan to buy and restore the Coach & Horses began to take shape. Pauline's family have run pubs in Salisbury in the past but more recently the Airey family has operated other successful businesses in the area. Just as crucially they had been regulars in the Coach & Horses before it closed and they and the Meakers had become personal friends.

"It was our stamping ground when Chris and Theresa were here previously and my parents had always wanted to own a pub," said Christian. A deal was agreed for the Aireys to buy the pub freehold and the Meakers to return to run it, free of any involvement with giant brewers, pubcos or other corporate monstrosities. The Coach & Horses was purchased for £325,000 in April last year.



The spacious interior of the Coach & Horses

An intensive six months restoration project began immediately, culminating in the Coach & Horses reopening on 6 October. Christian declined to say how much this has cost describing it only as a "substantial redevelopment" but it is clear that no expense has been spared. "We wanted to lighten the pub slightly, as it was rather dark before, while retaining its open, welcoming feeling," he explained. The toilets were revamped, the old kitchen ripped out and the courtyard opened up. The result is a spacious, relaxing place to eat and drink.

Chris Meaker said that business is very much 'wet' led at the moment with about 75% of takings from drink and 25% from food and there is an emphasis on supporting local breweries. There are 19 taps behind the bar, 16 of which serve beer, including all the core range from Old Sarum brewers



*The back yard
plenty of space to sit outside*

Dark Revolution – So.LA, Orbital, Verve and Velveten – plus a beer of the week. Three handpumps provide Summer Lightning from Hop Back and Solstice from Downton Brewery, with Hophead from Brighton-based Dark Star the only one from further afield. The cider is local from Cranborne Chase Cider.

The percentage of food takings will probably increase – it was about 80% during the Meakers' previous tenure – as the reopened Coach & Horses becomes more widely known. It has a good selection of pub grub all of which is home-made, including the bread. "Everything is fresh and we bake five different types of bread," said Chris.

Business built up encouragingly quickly after the October re-opening, mainly from locals who had heard about it by word of mouth but the pub still has to benefit from the tourist trade which remains centred around the Cathedral Close, High Street and the Market Square. Dog lovers may well provide an extra market as portraits of the Meakers' much-loved hounds Hector, an English bulldog, and Bertie, a cockapoo, went on the wall of the bar right from the start. Pictures of their friends Alfie, Charlie, Poppy, Barkley and Ozzie have now joined them. All have been



*The Coach & Horses has a good
selection of beers*

painted by sign writer and mural artist Charlie King. The aim is to add a dog a month so regular customers may find their pets immortalised.

What has emerged from this remarkable story is a revived, fully independent, locally-owned and locally-focused pub, which has to be a great plus for Salisbury. "It is something that we have always wanted to do as a family," said Christian. "Having Chris and Theresa as friends is crucial. We could not have done it without them."

Will Bennett

BREWERY NEWS

Dark Revolution

It has been a busy few months at Dark Revolution Brewery. The brew house has successfully relocated across the road from its previous site - freeing up space in the tap room for a barrel-ageing project.

After two weeks of no brewing, the brewery is back up to full production with the help of some very special new kit. The roof of the brewery now houses an impressive, 24kWp (kilowatt peak power output) solar system with an estimated annual power output of 21,000 kWh (kilowatt hour). To put that into perspective, each year this will save approximately 5000kg of carbon, reducing the brewery's carbon footprint. Reducing carbon usage even further, the brewery has also invested in a keg washer, allowing steel kegs to be reused.

To increase freshness and the shelf life of hoppy beers, Dark Revolution has taken delivery of a hop rocket. This allows dry hopping in an enclosed environment, reducing oxygen to really ramp up hop infusion and freshness.

To keep up with demand the brewery has also installed two brand new 50HL (hectolitres) fermentation tanks. Each of these is capable of holding 8,800 pints of beer, increasing the brewery's total annual capacity from 450,000 pints to 750,000 pints. And to make sure the beer is kept at its optimum freshness, cold store capacity has been increased by 50% and the warehouse by 100%.

The brewery is looking forward to a busy summer, attending nationally-acclaimed beer festivals.

Stone Daisy

A new head brewer, new seasonal beers and an expansion in capacity and staff mark an exciting

2024 for Stone Daisy Brewery. Tim Denlisoz (pictured) has joined as new head brewer after eight years with Signature Brew in London, and a new assistant brewer will have joined the staff by the time you read this. Plans are also in hand to increase from two brews a week to three.



Tim Denlisoz Head Brewer Stone Daisy Brewery

The three regular beers - Cow Down, Snail Creep Hanging and Park Bottom - are all available in cask from various local venues, with non-live versions on sale in cans and bottles. These are now joined by four seasonal ales a year, with the first - Winterbourne Mash - meeting great success in the winter. The spring ale, Stoney Hill, is an amber ale flavoured with Earl Grey Tea. Seasonal ales will be cask only.

The bottled regulars are now being rebadged and sold by both Longleat and English Heritage, and Snail Creep Hanging in cask form appears in the Beckford Arms, and the other pubs in the Beckford Group, as their house bitter.

Sixpenny Brewery

Opening times at the Sixpenny Tap have recently changed to 2pm - 8pm all week. The regular beers are Best(3.8% ABV), Gold(4.0%ABV) and IPA(5.2%ABV). Fortnightly music events on Saturday afternoons, starting at 3pm, are very well supported by local bands and open

mic sessions, with food such as chilli con carne provided by 'Funky Food'. Pizzas are still available early Friday evenings. Other entertainment is provided by magician Jon Gadd who 'appears' three or four times a week and the popular monthly quiz.

No special beers were brewed during the spring, but one is being brewed to commemorate D-Day (6 June 1944). The beer is a mild or pale ale, about 4% ABV. Before D-Day a lot of preparations for the landings were carried out in east Dorset and other areas in southern England. The unusual name for the beer, 'Dead Stick', is an air force term for an engine failure causing the pilot to glide the aircraft down or bail out, hopefully.

Two other changes will be happening in the next few months. Glass beer bottles will be replaced by 500ml cans for environmental reasons. The other change is a six months trial of Budvar Lager, in the hope of increasing income.

Scott Wayland, the owner of the brewery, has been asked to select some Dorset beers for Royal Ascot in June (not sure he will get a free ticket though!).

Rude Giant

Rude Giant is an independent, local brewery, currently brewing two cask beers and three keg products including two IPAs and a Pilsner. All their beers are gluten-free and their keg beers are also vegan. Their first city centre venue, The Rude Giant Beer House in Brown Street, Salisbury, offers eight local and national craft beers, including four of their own, alongside one to two casks. The Beer House hosts various events each month – including comedy nights, open mic, weekly quiz, live music and football. Food is available from their own kitchen with a menu offering food that goes well with drinks and substantial bar snacks (ingredients sourced locally).

Having established themselves locally and with a fast growing audience they plan to expand their cask and keg offerings more widely - including summer seasonals and experimental brews. Their first rural pub venture recently opened at the Royal Oak in Great Wishford. This aims to provide a comfortable community space with a beer line-up that appeals to walkers, cyclists and beer drinkers.

The brewery is located in the attractive Wylde valley; the team is looking to organise a number of open days and supper clubs over the spring and summer months to give people an opportunity to see the inner workings of their fast growing business.

Downton Brewery

Work continues on the upstairs extension to the tap room for private functions and is expected to be complete for the summer and there are already a number of bookings for private events from May onwards. The monthly Thursday evening quiz nights continue to be successful but there are no plans, as yet, to extend the tap room opening hours further. The brewery will be providing beer to the Winchester Cheese and Chilli Festival in early June.

A new venture for the brewery is the launch of its first keg beer, which is Cave Lager (4.6% ABV), available now at the tap room and in 30 litre kegs. Despite this innovation, the brewery's future focus is still intended to be on cask beer.

The monthly special for April was Dragon IPA (4.5% ABV) and for May, Moby Dick (4.7% ABV). A new beer, Small Balls (3.4% ABV), containing a mixture of Slovenian and German hops, will be released in June to coincide with the Euros Football Championship.

Hop Back

Head brewer Jamie Ferguson is pleased to report that the first batch of DragonFly (4.8%ABV) is tasting really good and will be available on cask throughout the summer months. Pacific Jade (3.9%ABV) makes an appearance in July with its unique zesty hops and subtle complexity and Calypso (3.4%ABV) follows on during August with hints of apple, pear and stone fruit.

To mark the 2024 Olympics in Paris we can look forward to drinking TorchBearer (4.5%ABV) described as a Golden Olympic Ale that utilizes Barbe hops from France for a red berry flavour and English malt and hops for complexity and a lasting bitterness.

Hop Back recently became a member of the trade organization SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers). One of the benefits for beer drinkers is that more pubs and other outlets are able to stock their beers using the Beer Flex ordering scheme.

The acquisition of the Albion pub in Winchester is progressing well and should be completed soon. A period of refurbishment will follow with a reopening date to be finalised later.

Contributors in order: Sarah Hughes, Andrew Ward, Derek Ellis, Julia Downes, Nigel Allison and John Hinton

THE INN SIGN SOCIETY



*The Inn Sign
Society logo*

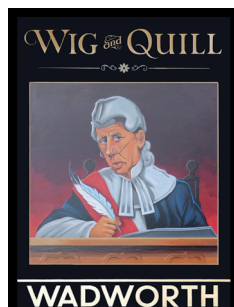
Founded in 1990, the Inn Sign Society raises awareness of the nation's pub signs and compiles a record for the benefit of future generations. Many pub names have links with events from the past or personalities of national and local importance, and the Society provides a forum for members to research the history of inns and pub names.



*The George & Dragon,
Castle Street, Salisbury*

is in danger of being lost forever. Pubs are not

just a place to enjoy a drink, they are often at the heart of the community and can reflect its history. Many members take a general interest in all signs, with some specialising in particular breweries, counties, aircraft or railways, to name but a few.



*The Wig & Quill,
New Street, Salisbury*

The Inn Sign Society is seeking to recruit more members and bring in new blood to help continue the good work done over the last 34 years. For more information, including on how to join, see the website at innsignsociety.com If the Inn Sign Society does not research, capture and save our pub sign heritage, perhaps no-one else will.

Iain Perks
Membership Secretary
Inn Sign Society

PUB NEWS

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

The Chickpea group has now reopened the Market Inn on Salisbury's Market Place and along with a smart new look they have renamed it **The Market Tavern**. There are plans for a food offer of simple pub grub such as chip butty, sausage or pie and mash or fish and chips plus a breakfast menu but initially it seems to be pizza from its **Nole** establishment a few doors away. Next door, **The Ox Row Inn** has reopened after its short refurbishment.

At Old Sarum, **Dark Revolution** has taken a second unit across the road and the refit includes solar panels that will provide 50% of the brewery's energy. Also at Old Sarum, **Rude Giant** has opened a Sports Bar at the Raymac football stadium. Another re-opening to look forward to after a short refurbishment is **The Royal Oak** at Great Wishford which is now part of Rude Giant. They say the focus will be on pub league teams, live music and events with a small bar menu.

The Boot Inn at Berwick St. James is now open following refurbishment. Ross and Amy will be launching the new Roam Catering menu, beers are Flack's Double Drop, Wainwright Gold and St. Austell's Tribute and the pub is very dog-friendly. Also, they have been nominated for Best Destination Pub in the Muddy Stilettos Wiltshire Awards – results will be out by the time you read this. Wishing them good luck! **The Bell and Crown** at Zeals has applied for planning permission to replace the outbuildings at the rear with outdoor seating.

The Ship Inn at Burcombe will not be reopening as a pub, the premises are now home to Italian restaurant **Villa Verde Wilton** and **The Talbot** at Berwick St. John is closed until further notice due to a change of ownership.

Well done to **The Hook and Glove**, Farley for the 'Restaurant Guru 2024 Recommended' award. South Western Railway has voted **The Haunch of Venison** in Salisbury the second cosiest pub in the south west and the fourth in the UK, and **The Compasses**, Chicks Grove the fourth cosiest in the south west and tenth in the UK. Well done to both pubs and also to **The Bell Inn** at Wylke for coming third in the *Wiltshire Life* Pub of the Year 2024 award.

Congratulations to Jonty and Amanda Newbery on their fifth anniversary at **The Duke of York**, Salisbury. BBQs are available from 5pm every Thursday evening through the summer.

The Village Freehouse, Salisbury has been open seven days a week since 2 April and **The Wig and Quill**, Salisbury is offering a 10% discount for CAMRA members. **The White Horse**, Quidhampton is now closed on Mondays and **The Bell Inn** at South Newton has gone over to its longer summer opening times but is still closed on Sundays.

Congratulations to **The Cuckoo** at Hamptworth for being awarded Salisbury CAMRA's Pub of the Year 2024, Rural Pub of the Year 2024 and Cider Pub of the Year 2024. Some branch members had a very pleasant evening taking a minibus to the presentation and landlord Nik made us very welcome with a range of beers and a buffet laid on in the marquee in the garden just for the occasion.

Sue Turner
Pubs Officer



THE CUCKOO SWEEPS THE BOARD IN CAMRA'S SOUTH WILTS PUBS AND CLUBS AWARDS

The Cuckoo Inn at Hamptworth on the edge of the New Forest triumphed in the annual local awards for Pubs and Clubs of the Year held by the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Landlord Nik Amplanitis and his team won Pub of the Year, the Derek Blackshaw Trophy as Rural Pub of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year – every one which it was possible for them to be awarded.



Landlord Nik Amplanitis outside The Cuckoo with his three awards

The title of City Pub of the Year went to the Duke of York in York Road, Salisbury for the third year running, which then narrowly lost the contest to decide the overall Pub of the Year winner to The Cuckoo. The recently-revived award for Club of the Year went to Salisbury Rugby Club on the outskirts of the city in Castle Road.



Nik with Keith Foster, CAMRA's branch organiser of voting and judging

A coachload of CAMRA members from Salisbury joined pub regulars at The Cuckoo for the awards presentation. Chris White, CAMRA branch chairman, presented Nik with his Pub of the Year certificate, Keith Foster, organiser of voting and judging, handed him the Derek Blackshaw Trophy, and Jane Foster, branch Cider Champion, gave him the Cider Pub of the Year award.

"I am so proud and grateful", said Nik as he mastered the art of holding three awards simultaneously. "I did not expect this at all and it has given us a huge boost to do more. We have tried to make The Cuckoo what it used to be." The thatched free house, which has been a pub for 150 years, was closed for more than two years until the new owner of the Hamptworth estate, which includes the inn, asked Greek-born Nik to revive it.

Members of the local branch of CAMRA voted to make The Cuckoo Rural Pub of the Year, making it the winner of the Derek Blackshaw Trophy, introduced last year in memory of their late chairman, who was a passionate supporter of country pubs. In the same poll they voted for the Duke of York as City Pub of the year. A run-off was then held by a five-strong jury from outside the branch headed by John Buckley from North Hampshire, which visited both pubs.



Left to right: Jonty Newbery, landlord, and Paul Cooper, manager, receive the Salisbury City Pub of the Year award from Keith Foster and Chris White of CAMRA

The title of Cider Pub of the Year was revived by the CAMRA branch in 2023 and was won by The Cuckoo, which repeated its success this year. In summer, the pub has up to 25 different ciders on sale and the range and quality of these and the skill that landlord Nik shows in ensuring that they are served in top condition won him the CAMRA award again.



Left to right: Keith Foster and Chris White from CAMRA present the Club of the Year award to Russell Jugg, club chairman and Neil Tonge, the cellar keeper

Salisbury Rugby Club was picked as CAMRA's Club of the Year and its chairman, Russell Jugg, was presented with the winner's certificate by Chris White and Keith Foster. CAMRA members were asked to nominate clubs and surveyors were then selected to score them in accordance with the Campaign's judging rules. The club achieving the highest score was declared the winner.

Will Bennett

ON THE BUSES

CAMRA nationally has re-launched its Public Transport Advisory Group to promote using buses and trains to visit pubs. The Salisbury & South Wiltshire Branch has responded enthusiastically and here is the latest report from our local Public Transport Officers:

A CAMRA beer festival at the Andover Tap at the Lamb was a great destination for a trip – although the pub is quite small, there is a wide range of real ales as standard, and these were supplemented by the beer festival offerings in the small rear annex. The highlight was the (very strong) home-brewed stout. As is often the case with these longer trips, people opted for the train for the home journey.

Stormy weather was the memorable feature of a visit by five intrepid explorers to Warminster and Crockerton. The driver of our 24 bus valiantly ploughed through floods and rain to Warminster, where after what was thankfully a short dash through the storm we were welcomed by a roaring log fire in the Old Bell.



The intrepid CAMRA members who braved the storm to go to Warminster

A pleasant lunch there was accompanied by a selection of four Wadworth ales. This was followed by a short trip on the 57 to the Bath Arms at

Crockerton – one of several pubs in the area with that name. The current owners have enlarged the public areas and the pub was very busy, especially with diners.

The same bus driver took us, and us alone, back to Warminster, where a quick half in another Bath Arms – this one a Wetherspoons – was followed by a return trip to Salisbury, with the same driver yet again.

A trial run on the 29 to Ebbesbourne Wake demonstrated the delights of this trip along tiny rural roads, where sometimes there is not even room for the bus to pass a pedestrian. A stop at the charming Horseshoe Inn was followed by a return run to Broad Chalke where lunch was enjoyed at the Queen's Head, now a Chickpea Group pub. This trip will be run again – see the diary in this issue for details.

The Horseshoe has three real ales, all served directly from the casks which are behind the bar. Swift One and English Lore are the permanent offerings, with one changing beer from the likes of Hattie Brown's, Otter or Palmer's Copper. A special treat is pickled eggs, made by the pub.

Finally a trip to Devizes ended up at the White Bear and not any of the intended destinations – a pub so good, and with such a great range of ales, that nobody was inclined to move from there.

Andrew Ward and Pete Matthews

40 YEARS OF BREWING EXCELLENCE

Netheravon village, nestling alongside the River Avon on Salisbury Plain, has a long history of mills dating back to at least 1086 when there were three documented in the village but it was only in 1983 when the Ministry of Defence finally sold the building to Tony and Robinetta Bunce that its brewing history was born.

The current building was built by the War Office



Bunce's Brewery in the 1980s

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BREWERY FOR SALE**

Self contained production unit & living accommodation in an active Wiltshire village with good access to A303 & M4. Full/hold property comprises:

- (a) 10-bar brew length plant: liquor tanks, 3 HP grit mill, two mash tuns, direct-fired copper, hop backs, wort cooler, three FVs, two conditioning tanks, casks & washing equipment plus all accessories. Occupying ground floor space in the single building. Capacity 1,500 bbls, expandable.
- (b) Separate accommodation above the brewery overlooking river Avon & water meadows: 2 beds, bath, wc, 30ft living room. Direct access to mill store/milling room.
- (c) Space for parking & loading off-road, riverside land with small workshop. Off-load forecourt for parking/loading, approx 1/2 acre riverside land, small workshop shed, planning consent for pair semi detached dwellings.

O.I.R.O. £320,000
Full details apply

J A Bunce, The Old Mill, Netheravon, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 9QB

*The advertisement
spotted by Stig*

brewing initially Bunces Bitter at 4.1% ABV. By 1990 the range had expanded to Benchmark a 3.4% ABV light, refreshing bitter (very 2024, clearly ahead of their time!) and Old Smokey, 4.8% ABV, still available and winning awards today. It was originally described by Tony Bunce as “colours like a touch of evening sun.....glowing

embers seen through smoked glass”. Very poetic.

By 1992 the Bunces decided it was time to move on and they put the brewery up for sale. A Danish master brewer, Stig Anker Andersen, bored of brewing bland Danish lager, was sitting in his office reading a UK brewing publication when he spotted an advertisement (pictured) for the sale of Bunces Brewery. His mind went into overdrive at the thought of being free to brew fine



*A besuited Stig signs the deal
with the Bunces*

English ales in his own brewery in a lovely location. He took his enthusiastic ideas home to his wife Anna Marie, nursing recently-born daughter Amalie. Anna Marie was somewhat less enthusiastic about Stig's plans than he was! No doubt some interesting family discussion took place but Stig prevailed and with true marauding Danish spirit he launched the longboat, donned his horned helmet and set sail for Wiltshire! (In truth he probably flew over with BA!)



*Anna Marie, Amalie
and Stig pack to move to
England 1993*

Discussions with the Bunces were completed and on 1 July 1993 Stig and Anna Marie became proud owners of Bunces Brewery. Arriving with seven months old Amalie and their belongings, Anna Marie, having realised the enormity of the decision commented to Stig, “what have we done?”, quickly corrected to “no, Stig what have you done?”... They laugh about it all now.



The handover at Stonehenge Ales in 2022

Despite the numerous ups and downs of the brewery business and the pub trade in general Stig and Anna Marie had a successful time, also building themselves a lovely home in the village and getting involved in the activities of the community they now call home. Stig changed the name of the brewery to Stonehenge Ales and expanded the range being brewed in Netheravon to five core beers available year round - Spire Ale, Pigswill, Heel Stone, Great Bustard and Danish Dynamite. These were backed up by a small range of seasonal beers relevant to the time of the year, notably Old Smokey porter and Sign of Spring, the green beer which manages to find its way to all corners of the UK. The brewery office wall was adorned by multiple awards for the beers from the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA), CAMRA and beer festivals around the country. There comes a time however when you just know that you need to step back and enjoy your success, a time when the pleasure of running the business starts to feel like a chore and that time came for Stig and Anna Marie in 2020. As Covid-19 was making life difficult for us all, they decided to step back and hand over the reins to others.

After considering various options, they decided to retain the building but lease the business to James and Nicola Robinson, a lovely young couple from Epping Forest in Essex. James was an accomplished home brewer and keen to step up to commercial brewing with Nicola looking after all things in the office and marketing, although occasionally now seen donning the wellie boots and filling casks in the brewery.

The deal was done between the four of them and James and Nicola took over formally on 9 March 2022, a definite sign of spring moment beckoning a whole new era for Stonehenge Ales and brewing at Netheravon Mill.

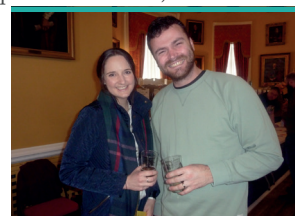
The first two years have gone well for James and Nicola, the brewery wall now adorned with awards for the beers brewed by James, and they have really settled into village life in Wiltshire,

not missing the daily commute into London one bit! On the brewing front, initially guided by Stig in a consulting role, the range has sensibly remained pretty much unchanged but James did branch out last year and produce the first beer using his own recipe. Pillars of Pale, a 4.2% ABV pale ale, debuted in July 2023 as a seasonal beer and went down a storm with local drinkers – I am assured it will return as well as another new beer

to mark 40 years of brewing at Netheravon Mill. A day of celebration is planned at the brewery on Saturday 29 June and full details will be available on the website www.stonehengeales.co.uk



Stig and Anna Marie receive a CAMRA campaigning award from Gerald Gibson 2022



Nicola and James Robinson

Gerald Gibson

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Richie of the NetheravonsPast.co.uk website for permission to use some of the information and a photo from the site, and to James, Nicola, Stig and Anna Marie for their help and patience researching the article

LOCAL DARK REVOLUTION STOUT TOPS BEER LOVERS POLL AT SALISBURY'S WINTERFEST

Old Sarum-based brewers Dark Revolution won the vote for the most popular beer at Winterfest, the winter beer festival held by the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) at the City's Guildhall. CAMRA presented Dark Revolution with the certificate won by 'Mummy Issues', a spiced stout, during a visit to the brewery's taproom by branch members.



Aaron Lewis (centre) of Dark Revolution receives the Beer of the Festival award from CAMRA's local festivals co-ordinator Andrew Hesketh (right) and CAMRA branch chairman Chris White (left). Photo: Roger Braddick

Aaron Lewis of Dark Revolution received the Beer of the Festival winner's certificate from Andrew Hesketh, festivals co-ordinator for Salisbury & South Wiltshire CAMRA, and Chris White, branch chairman. 'Mummy Issues', a 6.0 ABV stout using eight different malts combined with dark molasses and a cold brew Chai-spiced tea extraction, narrowly beat off competition from breweries in York and Lancaster to top the festival-goers poll.

"We are absolutely delighted to have won the very prestigious Salisbury CAMRA Winterfest with 'Mummy Issues,'" said Sarah Hughes,

director and co-owner of Dark Revolution. "It means so much to everyone here. The award reinforces what we strive for; to brew awesome beers packed with aroma, flavour and real character and we could not do any of this without our very hard-working brewery team."

Andrew Hesketh, who oversaw Winterfest's successful near-sellout move to a new venue at Salisbury Guildhall for its 25th edition, said: "We had a wonderful range of 26 cask ales and five ciders from all over the country and we can never predict which one will prove the most popular with the knowledgeable crowd who come along. But we can't help feeling a certain amount of local pride when one of our excellent South Wiltshire breweries tops the poll." The presentation took place during a visit by a group of CAMRA members to Dark Revolution's taproom in Lancaster Road on the Sarum Industrial Park just outside Salisbury.

Will Bennett

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WINTERFEST WAS WONDERFUL NOW SUMMERFEST PLANS TO PLEASE THE PUNTERS

Winterfest, Salisbury's much-loved winter beer and cider festival, proved a hit in its new location at the city's Guildhall in February. It was almost a sell-out with positive feedback on both the venue and the range of drinks on offer from the 430 attendees. Now the organisers, the Salisbury & South Wiltshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), are hoping for a repeat with the new **Salisbury Summerfest 2024** event.

Summerfest, which will also be at the Guildhall, will replace the longstanding Salisbury Beerex festival which used to take place at the city's Arts Centre. The new festival will be closer in style to Winterfest and will be held over two days on **Friday 21 June from 6pm to 11pm and Saturday 22 June from 11am to 8pm**. The organisers are adopting an extended Saturday session ending at 8pm as this has proved to be successful at the winter festivals.

Some 30 cask ales and four ciders, some from local breweries and cidermakers and others from further afield, will be available. This wide selection will include traditional-style, craft, vegan and gluten-free beers. The festival programme will list each beer in brewery order together with its strength, tasting notes, and, where possible, a link to the brewery website.

We will not be serving food or soft drinks but you will be able to bring these into the festival from outside to consume on the premises. You are welcome to purchase food from one of the nearby outlets and bring it back to consume with your beer or cider. In addition to the nearby outlets Saturday drinkers will also have access to the many market stalls selling delicious food of all descriptions.

Tickets will be available online at £10 per session and will include a free glass. For ticket information go to www.salisburycamra.org.uk/events

Andrew Hesketh
Festivals Co-ordinator



A lively crowd came to Winterfest



The magnificent surroundings of the Guildhall



Taking advice from a CAMRA volunteer

DIARY DATES *Salisbury & South Wiltshire*



JUNE

5th Open Branch Meeting

7.30pm The Pheasant, Salt Lane, Salisbury.

8th Bus Trip

11.54am X3 bus, stop M, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury to The Goat, Downton, Yew Tree, Odstock and Radnor Arms, Nunton. Return to Salisbury 3.42pm. No June Minibus Trip due to Summerfest.

19th City Saunter

7.30pm. Wyndham Arms, Winchester Gate, Coach & Horses, all Salisbury.

21st Summerfest, session one

6.00pm to 11.00pm at Salisbury Guildhall

22nd Summerfest, session two

11.00am to 8.00pm at Salisbury Guildhall

26th Bus Trip

10.02am 68 bus from outside the Cathedral Hotel, Milford Street, Salisbury to Winchester. Visit Old Vine, Wykeham Arms and Black Boy, all Winchester. Return to Salisbury at 3.44pm.

JULY

3rd Open Branch Meeting

7.30pm The Bell & Crown, Catherine Street, Salisbury.

6th Bus Trip

10.55am X5 bus, stop N, Blue Boar Row, Salisbury to the Crown Inn and The Shed, Pewsey. Return to Salisbury at 5.08pm.

12th Minibus Trip

6.30pm Branch Chairman Chris White's mystery tour!

13th Bus trip to Devizes Beer Festival

10.55 Catch 2 bus from New Canal, Salisbury, stop R, arriving in Devizes at 12.03. Walk five mins to festival at The Wharf. Return buses run at 3.45pm and 5.25pm. More information and tickets (£15) at www.devizescamra.org.uk/beer-festival

17th City Saunter

7.30pm. George & Dragon, Avon Brewery Inn, Qudos, Haunch of Venison, all Salisbury.

25th Bus Trip

Visit to Bankes Arms Studland and trip across the Sandbanks Ferry on open-top bus (weather permitting). Catch X3 at 9.55am, Salisbury from Blue Boar Row, stop M, return much later. Trip will be curtailed at Bournemouth in the event of rain - Goat and Tricycle.

AUGUST

3rd Annual General Meeting

12.00 to 3.00pm Salisbury Rugby Club, Castle Road, Salisbury.

10th Bus Trip

11.50am 29 bus from Blue Boar Row, Salisbury stop M, to Horseshoe, Ebbesbourne Wake, and Queen's Head, Broad Chalke. Return to Salisbury at 4.10pm.

16th Minibus Trip

6.30pm Barford Inn, Barford St Martin, Royal Oak, Great Wishford, The Bell, Wylye, and Wyndham Arms, Dinton.

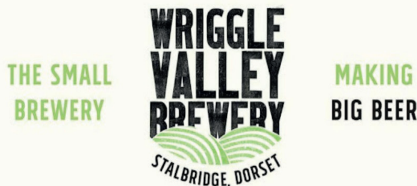
21st City Saunter

7.30pm King's Head, Bishop's Mill, Bridge Tap, Old Ale and Coffee House, all Salisbury.

28th Bus Trip

10.20am depart on 29 bus from Blue Boar Row, Salisbury, stop M, to The Mitre and Two Brewers in Shaftesbury. Return to Salisbury at 5.35pm.





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