



SPRING/SUMMER 2022

Magazine of the Rugby & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale

FREE



rugby.camra.org.uk

Rugby & District CAMRA Branch [inntouch.camra.org.uk](http://inntouch.camra.org.uk)

# Rugby and District Pub of the Year Results

## PUB OF THE YEAR! The Merchants Inn



**SECOND PLACE:** Seven Stars

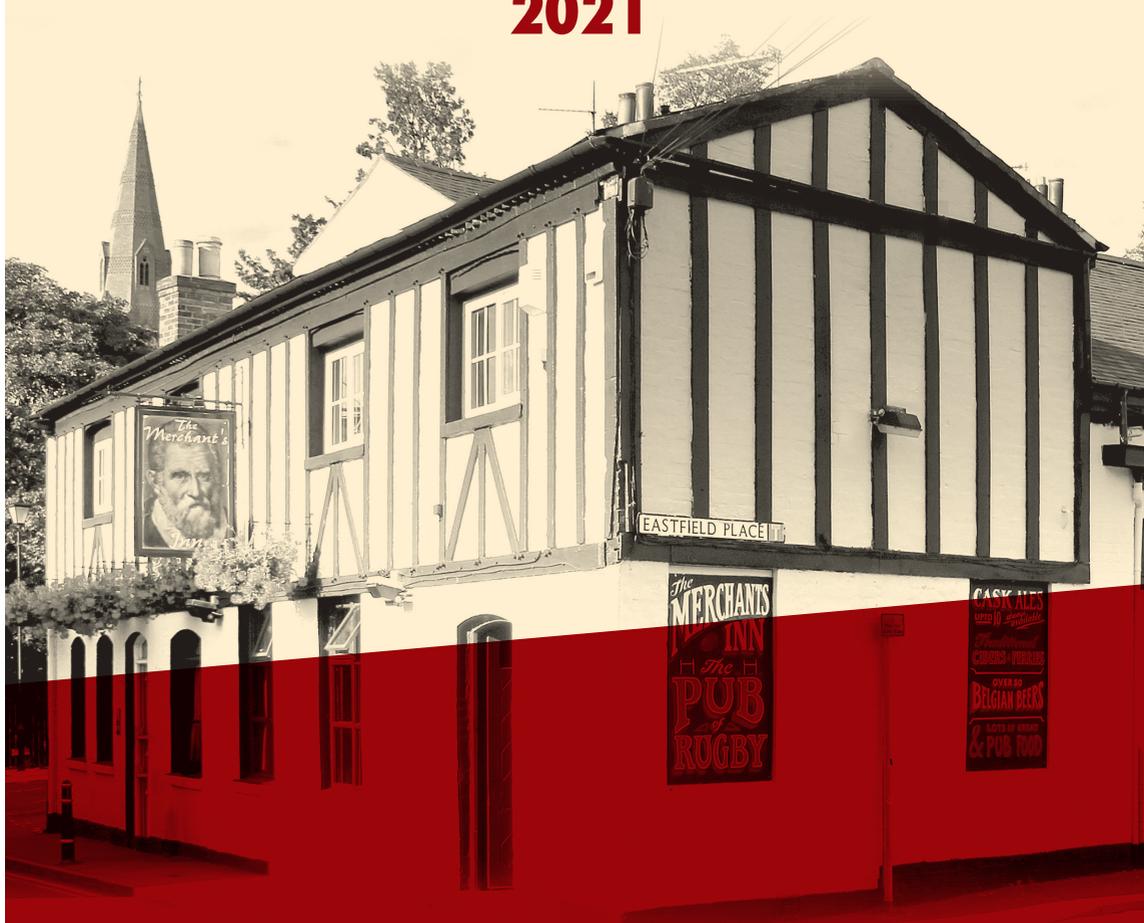
## THIRD PLACE:

 The Squirrel

# *The Merchants*

THE PUB OF RUGBY

## **RUGBY & DISTRICT CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2021**



@PubofRugby



@themerchantsinn



@TheMerchantsInn

01788 571119

marketing@merchantinn.plus.com

5-7 Little Church Street

Rugby CV21 3AN

# Editorial

A note from the editor...



Hello everyone, we are finally getting back to “normal”. The Rugby and District 37th CAMRA Beer Festival took place over the 4th and 5th March. What a weekend!! We had over 120 happy punters through the door within the first 30 minutes of opening, and that set the tone for the full two days. We had a great selection of beers. I do not think people realise how much work and effort goes into ensuring the festival is well planned and runs like clockwork. Look out for a feature in a future magazine “Organising a Beer Festival”.

A massive thank you to all who helped in the running of the festival, we are all volunteers and all knackered by the end of the weekend, but it was great fun. A few updates on pubs in and around the district. The Crown in the town centre has reopened after being closed for months. Although this has always been a keg pub, it’s great to see it back again and the karaoke as good as ever. Also, in the town, the Midas Lounge is being offered for sale as a development property and sadly Cave has shut down after a short spell in existence. Out in the villages the Arnold Arms at Barby, the Knightly at Yelvertoft and the George at Kilsby are all currently closed. Let’s hope they will reopen soon.

Finally, things are moving in the right direction at the White Lion at Pailton. They have been successful in a funding application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and had a grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund. More information is available on the Save The White Lion Facebook page, and we will be doing a follow up article in a future edition. The George is re-opening, with a full refurbishment.

One of the new features introduced in the Winter magazine was Meet the Licensee, with Amy and Chris out at The Cherry Tree and Andy and Liz at The Bull. This month, I had great fun catching up with Keith at The Victoria.

I hope you enjoy the articles. We have two great reports on new start up breweries, The Roman Way Brewery Ltd and Zero Six Brew Co - both local to Rugby, check them out.

I am always on the look out for new article and features, so happy to receive any pub news articles and feedback on how we can improve the mag. Please contact me at [editor@rugby.camra.org.uk](mailto:editor@rugby.camra.org.uk)

Cheers

Gaynor Imrie  
Editor Inn Touch

“ THE ULTIMATE  
CELEBRATION OF CASK BEER  
AND BRITISH BREWING ”



JONNY GARRETT

“ I BELIEVE THERE'S A  
BEER FOR EVERYONE AND  
THAT EVERYONE SHOULD FEEL  
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THEORY HERE! ”



MELISSA COLE



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*The views expressed in articles are those of individuals and Rugby and District CAMRA accepts no liability in relation to accuracy of advertisements. Acceptance of adverts in this publication should not be deemed an endorsement by Rugby and District CAMRA*

## Branch Diary and Events

The following events are open to all CAMRA members.

Non-members are welcome to attend the social events.

Please visit our website at [rugby.camra.org.uk](http://rugby.camra.org.uk) Please join our Facebook site, Rugby & District CAMRA Branch This is kept fully up to date with what is going on in and around Rugby. Everyone is welcome to participate you don't have to be a CAMRA member

### Branch Meetings

Our Branch meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month. We do not have a fixed venue. Please keep an eye on our Facebook site and the Branch website. We would love to see new members and regular members to make the meeting engaging and fun.

### Branch Social Events

We have regular social events, and they are posted on Facebook and on the Website. Usually on a Friday. Mini Bus pick up at the Raglan Arms is the normal start to most Friday Trips. Look forward to seeing you there.

## IN STOCK NOW: KEG AND BOTTLE

"For a new brewery this is a stunning beer. Mango aroma and flavours, wonderful."  
Clive G - Untappd.

Email: [matt@zerosixbrew.co.uk](mailto:matt@zerosixbrew.co.uk)



# Rugby & District Camra Pub Of The Year 2021

In a close run contest...

At the end of each year Rugby & District CAMRA members vote for their Pub of the Year. Those members who've asked to receive emails from the Branch are contacted via email and requested to send their votes back to an automated mail account.

Details on how to vote are also posted on the Website and Facebook. Votes are

automatically forwarded to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary, who each count the votes independently. No single officer can therefore affect or influence the votes.



We held the presentations over the last few Months. See the front Page

- 1st Place:       **THE MERCHANTS INN**
- 2nd Place:     **SEVEN STARS**
- 3rd Place:     **THE SQUIRREL**

We had a total of thirteen pubs receiving votes this year. The Rugby Tap, The Victoria Inn, The Friendly at Frankton., The Bull, The Steam Turbine, The Wheeltappers, The White Horse, The George, The Cherry Tree.

Well Done All



# Finding Their Way

When is it best to start a new brewery?

It's been two years now since we were struck down with the dreaded effects of Covid 19. Pubs had to stay closed and we all went into lockdown. It was hardly the best time to start a new brewery, but that's exactly the Roman Way Brewery did.

Opening in January 2020 and gaining a license at their premises two months later, they were left in the position of having hardly any outlets for their beer. Owners Phil and Dan had left the Blackpit Brewery from Silverstone to set up their own business and survived thanks to bottle sales and the goodwill of the village.

The brewery is situated in a fabulous building. It is in the old ordinance depot, next to the canal in the heart of the village of Weedon.

The Depot dates back to 1802 when Weedon was chosen as a secure inland location to house ammunition and small arms. It was used as barracks for the British army about to fight the Napoleonic Wars.

Now the building is hosting their 6-barrel brewing kit, with them making a wide range of Roman named ales. The brewery is also the location of their own tap room, which opens on Friday evenings and for other weekend events. Recently these have included a

comedy night and a Valentine's Day event with Santina's Wood Fired Pizzas.

The beers are now marching northwards up Watling St. and have found their way into some pubs in and around Rugby. I tried their nicely balanced session ale Cohort in the Red Lion at Kilsby and their classic English best bitter, Barbarian Best in



the Merchants. The beers have also been seen in the Royal Oak at Crick and they brew a bespoke beer called Brock IPA for the Badgers Arms in Long Buckby.

Good luck to Phil and Dan on their new venture. They have had an extremely tough start to life and have done well to survive. Here at Rugby CAMRA, we wish them all the best. Friends, Rugbeans, Drinkers - here are your beers.

*Richard Potter*



## Garden Party Drinks Festival

20 Real Ales & Ciders

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## We Would Love To Hear From You

We would like to hear from you - the readers. Send us your ideas and articles to [editor@rugbycamra.org.uk](mailto:editor@rugbycamra.org.uk). Items and articles (around 450 words) need to be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> September for the Autumn/Winter Edition

**Calling CAMRA members or Inn Touch readers...**

Can you help to distribute the Inn Touch magazine to your local pub? Many hands make light work. Our volunteers deliver Inn Touch magazine four times a year to their local pubs in approximately 300 locations. Even if you can only manage to deliver to one pub, it'll help us deliver to all locations in town and our surrounding villages. Many Thanks

To volunteer: Please contact your branch by emailing [chairman@rugbycamra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@rugbycamra.org.uk)

Lastly, we would like to personally thank our new and regular customers for their continued support.

# Pigeon, fancier

In December a new bird went on show in the village of Long Buckby. Out went the colourfully feathered, but tired looking Peacock and in came every fancier's favourite - The Pigeon.

The pub had been shut for some time, prior to its reopening on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December. The new owners have pulled off quite a coup in turning this drab old bird into a contemporary and welcoming local.

Located in a prime position on Market Place in the centre of the village, it was once owned by NBC of Northampton. It underwent a massive reconstruction in the 1970's and now 50 years later the change is of similar proportions.



New owner Steven - who also runs pubs in Daventry and Leicester - is planning a bright future for the Pigeon. He is keeping those moves under wraps for the time being though.

Two cask ales are being served, which are currently Doom Bar and a rotating guest ale. Hobgoblin Gold was on tap, the last time I visited. Rugby CAMRA wish all of those involved the best of luck in the future. We're sure it will be a flyaway success.

*Richard Potter*

# Summer of Pub

Love your local? Make 2022 the Summer of Pub CAMRA's 'Summer of Pub' campaign is back this year to get as many people as possible enjoying the season of good – or at least better – weather by heading down to their local for a pint.

We will be celebrating how our nation's pubs offer numerous benefits to people's mental and social well-being and play an instrumental role in the communities they serve. After two years of lockdowns, restrictions and unprecedented pub closures, this is a time to celebrate being able to return to our locals and to recognise everything they have done throughout the pandemic.

Campaigning to support Britain's pubs is something anyone can get involved in and can be as simple as stepping out the door and taking a troll to a local. If you can encourage some friends or family to join you, then all the better. Drinking cheap supermarket booze at home does little to improve your life – but change that setting to the social environment of a pub and you can increase your happiness, make friends and connect with others in your local community, while still enjoying the tipples of your choice.

CAMRA's National Chairman, Nik Antona, said: "We are kicking off on 2<sup>nd</sup> May to coincide with the first Bank Holiday of the summer, and the celebrations will run until the last summer Bank Holiday on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

"This is the first time in two years that we've been able to come together and support pubs, clubs, brewers and cider makers in this way, and I urge everyone to make the most of this summer by joining in with Summer of Pub however they can.

"The financial aftershocks of the pandemic, combined with recent tax hikes mean that this is a difficult time for the trade. It is vital we give them all the support we can, so that we can continue to enjoy everything that makes our nation's pubs so special for many summers to come.

"If your idea of a perfect summer involves a pint and a beer garden, then get involved, and start your Summer of Pub." To find out more and see Summer of Pub events near you, visit [www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub](http://www.camra.org.uk/summerofpub)



# RUGBY

## DISTILLERY

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07794 592511

[richard.wilson@rugbydistillery.co.uk](mailto:richard.wilson@rugbydistillery.co.uk)

07736 977062



**You can check out where to find us on our website and social media but to just name a few of the events we are attending:**

Pub in the Park - Warwick  
Pub in the Park - Bath  
Gin to my Tonic - Glasgow  
BBC Winter Good Food Show  
Spring Producer Markets - Leamington  
Artisan Markets - Coombe Abbey



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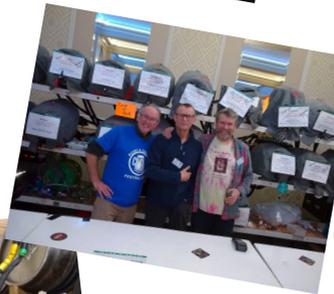
[enquiries@thearnoldhouse.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@thearnoldhouse.co.uk)



The Arnold House – Masonic Buildings

# Photos From The Rugby And District 37th Camra Beer Festival

We had a brilliant festival. All the beers sold out. We had a fab band on Saturday Evening Blue Extra.



## Opening Times

Monday & Tuesday 4-8  
Wednesday 4-10  
Thursday 4-11  
Friday & Saturday 12-11  
Sunday 12-7



Cask Ale from £3.30 pint  
Craft Ale from £4.60 pint  
Large Wine £4.60  
G&T from £3.50  
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**The Bull is part of the Stonegate Group. We are a local proper pub in the heart of Rugby town centre offering a range of cask ales, beers, lagers, ciders & even a cocktail or two**



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visit our website [www.greatukpub.co.uk/bullrugby](http://www.greatukpub.co.uk/bullrugby)  
Facebook ok TheBull,Rugby@LiveAtTheBull

# International Scientific Cooperation and Beer

In Lviv there's a famous pub called the Scottish Café. It was named in the 1930s after the Walter Scott-inspired paintings which once adorned its walls. Actually, it's more a hotel nowadays than a pub – it's the place where the journalists that you see on TV are reporting from, during Russia's war in Ukraine.

To physicists like me, the Scottish Café is famous not for hosting journalists; it is famous because in the 1930s physicists used to meet there to discuss all sorts of convoluted maths problems. There, over a pint or two, Lviv's physicists wrote down some of their hardest problems --- and solved some of them --- in a large notebook known as the Scottish Book. If you solved a problem from the Scottish Book, you got a prize – anything from a pint of ale to a (live) goose!

One of the most fascinating problems in mathematics is that of percolation. It was introduced in the 1950s by Simon Broadbent and John Hammersley. Broadbent worked at the United Glass Bottle Manufacturers and Hammersley was at the UK Atomic Energy Research Establishment. Broadbent was interested in designing filters for gas masks – to stop death percolating through --- and Hammersley suggested using computer simulations to crack the problem.

In 2017, I met world-renowned physicist Bertrand Berche at the Scottish Café in Lviv. We had been working together on percolation theory – not for gasmasks, but for percolation that seeps through faster – like an advance party of an invading force. We entered the problem in the modern-day Scottish Book and returned to Rugby where for five years we worked on it with fellow AMRA member Tim Ellis. Taking up Hammersley's suggestion, we used simulations to progress the problem on a computer. We aimed to give a presentation on our findings in Lviv this Spring.

In the meantime, war broke out. While we didn't yet get to relay our findings on percolation in computer simulations, we, and many others, are helping address a real-life problem; Russian troops seek to percolate through Ukraine bringing death and destruction as they do so.

At the time of writing, the Rugby Tap is donating 10% of their weekly take to the Ukrainian Appeal and beer drinkers of Rugby, like Tim and me, are doing their bit. But you don't have to live in Rugby, or even the UK, to support Ukraine; CAMRA pubs all over the country --- and similar organisations worldwide --- are rallying around. As reported in What's Brewing magazine the 500-plus strong International Beer.

Judges group "strongly condemns the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine." They state "The entire



world is facing great challenges that can only be overcome with international cooperation. Our community experiences at every beer competition how people from all countries can successfully work together in harmony, respect and shared enthusiasm. The invasion of Ukraine tramples all these values underfoot."

I can say with confidence that Russian troops will not percolate throughout Ukraine. The valiant defence of that heroic nation will see to that. Instead, common values such as respect and shared values will prevail.



We will return to Lviv and deliver our presentations and together we will sit in the Scottish Café, drink beer, and discuss physics. And in a similar vein, Ukrainian physicists will visit Rugby. And I promise that the first beer (but not the goose) in the Rugby Tap will be on me.

*Ralph Kenna*

## IN STOCK...

### Matoaka 82

This New Zealand IPA is infused with **passion fruit** and grapefruit flavour notes to get your thirst quenched fast, abv of 4.5%. This beer won our first blind taste testing!



### Enchilager

The Enchilager is made for Mexican nights, this summer lager is made for when you are sat on the veranda watching the world go by. You will get a **wonderful lime** flavour and the love of an **earthy jalapeno**

### Flamango

The Flamango has spread it's wings, this is a **Mango and Hibiscus IPA**, a very fruity and desirable ale, perfect and ready for summer.



## LATEST NEWS...

New premises and kit in the pipeline and a new handcrafted range hitting the shelves very soon.

We are proud to be in collaboration with Simply Cider and will be releasing "Six on the Beach" very soon. Keep an eye on our social channels for launch!

## CAMRA DISCOUNT...



For a whole year we are giving every Camra member 10% off online and in person sales for our range of beers – just use code 'CamraRugby' and online in the order notes drop in your membership number.

We are proud to be developing beers for CAMRA's "One to try".

## FUEL YOUR FUN

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SIX  
brew co**

# Sedgley And The Gornals

It's been over ten years since our last visit to the Black Country. Apart from the occasional stop off at the Great Western next to Wolverhampton station, we had forgotten about the delights and hills of this hotbed of Midlands brewing.

Sedgley is situated south of Wolverhampton, so after the train journey you have to jump on one of the frequent buses to reach your destination. Once in the town there is only one place to visit first - The Beacon Hotel, home of the Sarah Hughes Brewery. The place was packed when we arrived and we sat down to enjoy our pints of Ruby Mild. Dark and sweet and weighing in at a hefty 6, it's a British classic.

It's hard to say anything new about the Beacon, but for me it's just about the perfect pub. I strolled around, taking in the many rooms, bar counters, doors and the people that inhabit this bit of marvellous. You leave knowing you have just visited one of the best pubs in Britain.

Now the walking begins. After 20-25 minutes you have reached Upper Gornal and the first of two calls. The Jolly Crispin dates from the 1820's and was conveniently situated on the old Wolverhampton to Dudley turnpike. It is now the home of the Fownes Brewery and serves a vast array of cask ales. We chatted with the locals, patted their dogs and could only pay with cash over the bar. Just over the road is another Black Country institution. The Britannia was once a home brew pub, but is now owned by local brewery Bathams.



Their balanced and slightly sweet bitter was downed whilst munching on a cheese, onion and black pudding cob. The rear snug bar is renowned for its row of hand pumps that are directly against the wall, with no counter between them and the public.





Time to walk down hill to Lower Gornal. At the bottom of Temple Street are two more pubs - The Fountain and the Old Bulls Head. The Fountain had another wide range of ales, and I went for a Green Duck beer and a crispy cheese twist. Down the road is the Old Bulls Head, the brewery tap of Black Country Ales. Its exterior is a fabulous mix of brickwork and etched windows, inside it looks like The Raglan or The Windmill. It's well worth doing, especially as you've walked so far to get there.

At this point it's a good idea to jump back on the bus rather than the lengthy trudge upwards to Upper Gornal and Sedgley. There are three more Good Beer Guide pubs in Sedgley and more of course in Wolverhampton. Whatever you do, it will have been a great day out in the Black Country.

*Richard Potter*



# Meet the Licensee the Victoria Inn Rugby

Keith Abbis

## The Victoria Inn

Situated on the edge of Rugby town centre, building dates back to 1875. The Victoria has always been a public house, offering a wide variety of excellently kept ales and craft beers. The Pub is a real community hub, Quiz nights are Thursdays and Sundays, live sport is a regular feature and watched with good humour and sportsmanship. Keith joined the Victoria in 2007, and has joint ownership with Nick Pugh, and over the years has improved the selection and quality of beers on offer and over the last few years has increased his selection of Craft Ales.

Plans for this year- Raising funds for a defibrillator which will be positioned on the outside of the premises and will serve the surrounding community. Please follow the Victoria on Facebook to find out dates for the charity events so you can support the pub in this venture. Keith will be completing the outside drinking area, and unveiling the mysterious cavern that has been found...



*Clare and Keith Abbis*

## **CAMRA members** **Are you missing out on local branch activities?** **Not getting emails from your branch?**

It would be worth checking the privacy setting of your membership on the CAMRA website.

You may have chosen not to receive electronic communication from your branch.

It is really simple to change your settings so the branch can contact you.

Sign in at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) and go to My Membership/Edit Membership details or call 01727 867 201. You will need your membership number to hand.

# Zero Six Brew Co

Great Plans for this year

Zero Six Brew Co was officially setup on New Year's Eve 2021. The pandemic year pretty much honed everyone to re-evaluate and work out what's important to them. We (Matt and Spike the co-founders of Zero Six) decided that it was the opportune moment to start a long-held ambition. We worked as colleagues, and as client and supplier in print and marketing for some 13 years, but we wanted our own thing.

We are both beer fans and Matt had spent 10 years home brewing and his urge to take it further was matched by Spike, who was passionate about building a brand to equal the love we both had for beer.

We started off brewing our recipes with the legend that is Kev Featherstone of the Pig Pub Brewery in Claybrooke Magna and Steve at the Pig Pub. Kev has been instrumental in getting us going and has been a font of knowledge to us since we started and he continues to support and mentor, we owe him a huge debt of gratitude. We also continue to have great help and support from Mark at O'Neill's Brewery in Willey. A big thank you to you both.

We wanted to bring a twist of flavours to our beers, matching them to foods and we are keen to experiment with our recipes, at the same time, we want to pay homage to the traditions of beer, and will be releasing our own classics alongside our already established core ranges. We want to support and make the most of local suppliers, and we are growing our own hops to use in experimental batches and hope to develop this further.

Our new premises in Lutterworth, is on schedule and we are driving to move into July this year. The new premises will house our Nano kit alongside our smaller batch kit to offer a range of different size



batches. The site will also be setup to re-use any waste product from the brewing process. We will be also be looking to start monthly taste testing and special batch pick-ups direct from the site. We aim to do plenty of tasting nights around the local area as well and have been very lucky to have received great support from pubs like The Real Ale Classroom in Lutterworth and we are really looking forward to seeing many of you out and about at events this summer at Catthorpe Manor Farm, Coombe Abbey and the Great British Food festival at Hardwick Hall.

Pubs for us, are the heart of what we do, and the communities they serve, we hope our beer can help to keep that the case. We are also teaming up with local food suppliers to bring events on the road and into pubs in and around the areas. We are very excited to be part of the 'CAMRA Try One Campaign' which we will be releasing over the next few months. We are loving being part of this community and roll on the next 12 months.

*Cheers Matt and Spike*

# PUB RETURNS TO WATFORD VILLAGE

As a man in his mid-50's, some of my earliest drinking memories were of being driven round to visit our lovely village pubs. So many have gone now and the Henley Arms in Watford Village was just one of them. Standing in a row of cottages, it took its name from Lord Henley who owns much of the land around the village. Now 40 years after the Henley closed, pub life has returned to the village.

The Wheelwright's Arms is situated in Church Street, behind some sturdy wooden gates and surrounded by a large orchard garden. It is tiny, in fact it must easily be now the smallest pub in the Rugby area. You are greeted inside by a small bar with two hand pumps and seating on the right for about ten people at most.

The pub takes its name from its former use as the village wheelwrights shed. It was built in 1830 and as you can imagine has been extensively modernised for today's purposes. It actually opened for trading just before lockdown, but because of the erratic

nature of this period we have only just become aware of the place. Beers are being supplied by our local brewery, Dow Bridge of Catthorpe and bottled beers are from Hook Norton. Both the Centurion and the Praetorian Porter were in fine form when I visited recently. More beers will be available from an outside bar, especially at events such as their jubilee celebrations on the 4th of June. Thai food is also served in a marquee that adjoins the pub and they are very much looking forward to the summer when visitors can spread out across the extensive garden.



The pub's opening hours are a bit unusual and it's very much the case of checking its Facebook page before you visit. The reason for this is the fact that it only has a license to sell on 80 days per year.

So currently they are open 5-10 on Fridays and 4-10 on Saturdays and Sundays, but only every other weekend. In May this will change from 2-10 Saturday and Sunday and in August it will open every weekend, definitely check before you set out. It's wonderful to see a new village pub in our area. They really bring life and a community spirit back to a village. Rugby CAMRA wishes it the best of luck and much success in the future.



*Richard Potter*

# The Wheatsheaf Crick

Bar  
Restaurant  
B&B

Excellent fresh food  
Spacious restaurant  
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Real ales and large selection of wines  
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Weekend Brunches 9am - 11am  
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Last Thursday of every month

**Bookings and enquiries**  
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**info@wheatsheafcrick.com**  
**www.wheatsheafcrick.com**



THE REAL ALE  
  
**Classroom**  
 LUTTERWORTH

MICROPUB SPECIALISING IN  
 CRAFT CASK & KEG BEERS,  
 LOCAL CIDER, GIN & WINE.



(Steve runs  
 the Leicester  
 pub...)

This is  
 Ian...  
 he's the  
 landlord

Small, friendly,  
 cosy micropub  
 run by two ex  
 teachers, Ian  
 & Steve.

Aim: to teach,  
 learn, have fun  
 and serve the  
 very best modern  
 cask, keg and  
 canned beer in  
 the world!

OPENING HOURS:

MONDAY: CLOSED  
 TUESDAY: 4-10  
 WEDNESDAY: 4-10  
 THURSDAY: 4-10  
 FRIDAY: 4-11  
 SATURDAY: 1-11  
 SUNDAY: 1-6



DOG  
 FRIENDLY!

LOCAL SPIRITS!

LARGE  
 GARDEN!  
 (with covered &  
 heated areas)

LOG BURNING FIRE!



4 STATION ROAD, LUTTERWORTH, LE17 4AP T: 07824 616 334 E: therealaleclassroom@gmail.com

 @theclassroomlutterworth

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