

FREE

# Inn Touch

## Rugby & District Branch



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

Winter 2023-24

## Pub Of The Year Award



## Saving the White Lion, Pailton - latest

# Also inside: a day to day guide to regular events in our local pubs

# *The Merchants*

THE PUB OF RUGBY

## **Live Music At The Merchants**

**19th March:  
Thom Kirkpatrick - One Man Band**

**23rd April:  
Big Family**

**21st May:  
Solid Bond**



# About Inn Touch

Inn Touch is the quarterly magazine of the Rugby and District branch of CAMRA. It has a print run of 2000 copies and is distributed by branch members to over 100 pubs in the local area.

[www.rugby.camra.org.uk](http://www.rugby.camra.org.uk) or 

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The views expressed in this magazine are those of individuals and Rugby and District CAMRA accepts no liability in relation to the accuracy of advertisements.

Advertising in 'Inn Touch' is reasonably priced at ¼ page = £40, ½ page = £75, full page = £125, inner front / back = £150.

To place an ad in the next edition, please contact the editor or pass your details to a CAMRA member.

# Editor's intro

Hello and welcome to the winter / spring edition of Inn Touch, the first one in 2024. It's hard to believe (for me at least) that we are nearly a quarter of the way through the twenty first century.

I was mulling something over recently: do the less venerable generations than myself still go on pub crawls? Or are they just for my generation? I still like a pub crawl, but they are quieter and tamer than the ones I used to enjoy in my youth. Pre mobile phones meant a lot of seeking out the trail of your tipsy mates who'd gone off without you- usually because you were late showing up or making a miserable, inebriated attempt to chat up a bird! Happy days.

Nowaday, pubs generally are having a hard time of it, compounded by the gradual drop in footfall over the years. Sadly many have thrown in the towel and more are destined for closure. Less and less options for that town centre pub crawl.

One way to help reverse this is to become a member of CAMRA. It campaigns relentlessly to protect our nation's pubs;

not just harp on about beer quality. So please join up (see advert rear page).

Finally, there was sad news in February: the owner of the Rugby Tap micropub died suddenly. I'd gotten to know Mike quite well over recent years as a nice,

decent bloke. As I write this my thoughts are with his family and friends.

Cheers,

*Steve - editor*

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# Pub of the Year 2023

Congratulations to the Seven Stars for once again winning the Rugby CAMRA Pub of the Year. After two years of coming 2nd, it has regained the title that is voted for by CAMRA members in our area.

It has been a difficult year for the pub as they started a new agreement with Everards (their landlord and Leicestershire Brewery) which meant that they had to purchase their cask ales via them, whereas previously they could buy them from whoever they wanted. This brought down the rent considerably and made the pub economically viable, but it increased the cost of cask ales by about £30 to £40 more per cask. Everards were very supportive and flexible and they recognised that a wide range of cask ales is essential to the pub. Lisa and Graham are still allowed to source ales via Byatt's Brewery in Coventry, Brunswick Brewing Company in Derby and the wholesaler, Small Beer.

The pub always sells up to ten real ales and four real ciders. Everards Tiger and Old Original are joined by Byatt's Platinum Blonde from Coventry. The guest ales often feature one of Byatt's excellent strong ales and one dark beer. Food is a simple affair with pork pies joined by Graham's famous homemade scotch eggs and Wednesday evening is pie and mash night.

Lisa and Graham are huge Leicester Tigers fans. They run



regular buses to the Tigers home games and they also show internationals and Gallagher Premiership Rugby games in the pub.

The couple thanked all their customers and staff for their success, without whom it would not have been possible. They are also looking forward to going on to represent Rugby in the county competition.

Finally, congratulations from Rugby CAMRA on becoming a deserving winner of our Pub of the Year.

*Richard*

Above:  
Richard  
presenting the  
award to Lisa  
from the Seven  
Stars

# The Red Lion Kilsby Pub and Dining.



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# Beer Survey



Recently Rugby CAMRA members carried out a Price and Availability survey around pubs and clubs in the town centre.

We picked 30 premises all in the main town centre, mostly pubs and clubs.

Our aim was to find out how many sold real ales, what the average price was for various alcoholic drinks and how many different ales and ciders were available to the drinkers of Rugby.

The downside of the survey was only 19 out of the 30 chosen sold real ales but this is a big increase from the last time we carried out a survey (albeit a few years ago).

On the plus side we found there were 77 different beers on sale from 45 different breweries which we all thought was a fantastic selection taking into account a lot of the pubs would have changed beers a few times over the course of a week and the actual figure would be much higher.

On the traditional cider side we found 21 different ciders or perries from 10 different

producers which again is a fantastic choice considering only 11 of the pubs surveyed sold traditional ciders.

On the price front the cheapest pint we found was a mere £1.77 whereas the most expensive was a whopping £6.45, albeit for a continental lager.

The average price of all the pubs surveyed was as follows:

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| Lager             | £4.07 |
| Stouts            | £4.75 |
| Ciders            | £4.01 |
| Craft beer        | £4.90 |
| Traditional cider | £4.10 |
| Cask ales         | £3.64 |

This proves again that cask ales is the best value drink for the pub goer.

It's a shame that so many pubs don't give it a try.

Rugby CAMRA would like to thank all the pubs and clubs that took part in the survey and supplied us with the information.

*Steve Durrant*  
*Survey Organiser*

# Saving the White Lion, Pailton

## Episode 2



Above:  
members of  
the working  
group outside  
the Pailton pub

In the four years since we last reported about the Save the White Lion Project, lots has happened.

The Save the White Lion Working Group (SWLWG), set up by Pailton Parish Council, applied to the Architectural Heritage Fund for funding to develop an architectural and business plan which then enabled us to apply to the National Lottery Heritage Fund with an Expression of Interest to further fund the development of the project. This development phase involved procuring the services of a project manager, architect,

business consultant, fundraising consultant, conservation consultant, QS and various services and surveys. We then had a set of fully developed plans covering all elements of the business and building works. We had a successful mid-stage review with NLHF which proved we had a viable proposition and this was communicated to the community at a public meeting and via flyers.

The final plans were based on the original community consultation and this project will not just be a pub but a community hub. There will be a pub, restaurant, café, shop, post office, enterprise

units, accommodation, and garden front and back. In the course of the conservation works we found out that the outbuilding at the front was originally a brewhouse and we have lots of information as to how the building developed from a 17<sup>th</sup> C farmhouse to a coaching inn. An important part of the project is to allow the community to be able to appreciate the heritage of the building. Throughout the project we have been fortunate to be given various historical artefacts relating to the White Lion (see photo below).



In November we put in our full application to NLHF for funding towards the delivery stage, which is the renovation of the building, and we expect to hear the outcome in March. We have a programme of works that should see the shop open in early 2025 and the pub at the end of the year.

Our funding consultant has been busy applying on our behalf to various funding bodies such as the Community Ownership Fund to help meet our fundraising target. We hold regular local fundraising events; a monthly pub style quiz, an annual garden party and pub games evenings, afternoon teas and the “Little Lion” Bar at Pailton fete.

Information on these events is available on our Facebook page ‘Save The White Lion, Pailton’.

*Richard*

In aid of

*Save the White Lion, Pailton*

**2024 dates**

**18 January**   **19 September**

**29 February**   **17 October**

**21 March**   **21 November**

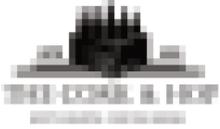
**11 April**   **19 December**

Follow us for the latest updates

@WhiteLionPailton

# PUB QUIZ NIGHT

# Cork and Hop - Lutterworth



The Cork and Hop in Lutterworth is now open Friday 11am until 6pm and also at events throughout the month.

We were absolutely thrilled that our first meet the producer tasting night was with Mount Saint Bernard Trappist brewery in Leicestershire.

Head brewer Ross Adams talked us through the history of the Abbey and of Trappist beer. They are one of only 9 Trappist breweries worldwide and Ross as head brewer is in distinguished company with the world famous Belgian Trappist breweries in the same pantheon.

Following on from that inaugural night the below events are also

taking shape and, tickets are still available at:

[www.thecorkandhop.co.uk](http://www.thecorkandhop.co.uk)

We will also be selling brewery tour vouchers for various Midlands and further afield breweries and vineyards.

**SATURDAY 16th March** – choose a paddle of tasters from local producers, plus live music.

**SATURDAY 30th March** - bar open after talk – Twisted Barrel.

**FRIDAY 12th April** – bar open after talk - Borderlines Brewery – head brewer Oli.

**FRIDAY 26th April** – Zero Six Brewery 7pm - 11pm – taste and choose their next beer.

*Matt - Cork and Hop*



40 Albert Square, Rugby CV21 2SH  
01788 535478 [sevenstarsrugby.co.uk](http://sevenstarsrugby.co.uk)

Serving an ever-changing range of cask and craft ales plus real ciders. Fine wines and a good selection of spirits also available.

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Check out our Facebook page for events including coaches to Leicester Tigers, charity quizzes & live music.

**SEVEN STARS**  
—RUGBY—



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# Inn Sign Society

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 Inn Sign Society is seeking to recruit more members and bring in new blood to help continue the good work done over the last 32 years.

For more information, including on how to join, see the website at

[www.innsignsociety.com](http://www.innsignsociety.com)

If the Inn Sign Society doesn't research, capture and save our pub sign heritage, perhaps none else will.

*Iain Perks, Membership Secretary, Inn Sign Society*

A longer article from the Inn Sign Society will occur in a future edition of Inn Touch; featuring some spectacular pub signs.

*Steve - editor*

# Small scale cider making

I have been making cider at home in Rugby for the past 16 years. Before this I used to help Dad with his annual cider efforts. Dad had a mini orchard of 10 trees and used windfalls to produce a rough cider: cloudy, still and alcoholic. It often left you feeling rough next day.

Dad learnt his craft with his grandfather in Gloucestershire, where several full orchards were gleaned for fallers and unsaleable fruit. Dad described the fruit as “good, bad and indifferent”. A horse powered millstone and stone trough was used to crush the fruit and the pulp was wrapped in horse hair mats and pressed in a large screw press. This was fermented naturally in wooden casks. Each cask had a bucket of pond water added (no rats). Dad reported that in 1933/4 in drought conditions the pond dried out and well water was used instead. This was a failure and most unpopular with the farm workers.

When I make cider, I aim to use good fruit and if I wouldn't eat it, it doesn't go in. This is perhaps not a hard and fast rule as good windfalls are used. I source my apples wherever I can. I have 6 trees at home, 3 of which are bittersweet cider apples. Family

and friends are a good supplier of fruit, as are wild trees on old railway lines and in hedgerows. Community orchards are also very useful. I avoid roadsides and parks due to a variety of possible pollutants.

The title pic shows a typical selection and includes spartan, bramley, russet, perthyre and gascoyne scarlet plus 5 unknown varieties. I try to collect a good mix of varieties and usually include a few crab apples.

I wash the apples to remove grass, soil, leaves and earwigs and use a weak campden tablet solution followed by a clean water rinse.

I use an electric fruit mill which gives a finely shredded apple pulp called pomace. This is a



very speedy and clean way to pulp apples. In the past I have used a kitchen mincer, a hand powered scrapper and a pulpmaster (a lethal combination of a bucket, a stainless steel blade and an electric drill). None of these were particularly efficient.

The pomace from three baskets of washed apples is enough for 5 or 6 gallons of juice.

All my cider making kit is thoroughly scrubbed and sterilized with campden tablet solution and rinsed in clear water. This includes wooden press parts, buckets, scoops and fermenting vessels. I avoid contact with metal as much as possible. I have a bucket of water nearby to sterilise and rinse any parts which become dirty.

Next, I press my fruit pulp in a wooden basket with wooden packing plates and a hydraulic car jack, all set in a sturdy steel



Left: milling the apples to pomace  
Right: pressing the pomace

frame. Previously the basket was part of a screw press. The screw was steel, and in contact with the fruit, and also wore out under intense pressure on the threads.

Juice runs out very rapidly to start with and each pressing will give about 2 gallons. I usually check the juice for sugar levels/potential alcohol using an hydrometer or refractometer. Most of my juices would measure out at 1.05 specific gravity which will give around 5-6% alcohol.

Fermentation is very vigorous to start with and during a warm September will be nearly complete in 3 weeks. I often bottle this first cider in October to be ready for Christmas. Others I will leave longer whilst they mature more thoroughly and bottle in January or February. These will be ready to sample by Easter, and I rarely have any left by cider making time. This year I have produced 36 gallons, and I have so far averaged 20 gallons a year.

During bottling, again I go for thorough cleanliness and sterilisation. Typically, I add a ¼ teaspoon of sugar to each bottle and prefer crown capping to swing tops as cleaning is easier. These ciders will usually drop totally clear with a slight sparkle; a few I will leave as a still cider. In all cases they remain “live” and a degree of care is required during storage. I’ve never had an exploding bottle but have had the occasional fountain on opening.

*Tim Hanby*

This article with additional pictures will appear on the branch’s website in due course.



## THE LAWFORD ARMS, RUGBY

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# Regular local pub events

The info here is by no means the complete picture and events are subject to change. Please check with the host's website or Facebook page before attending.

## Monday

### Quiz night

Black Horse, Bilton  
Green Man, Dunchurch  
Real Ale Classroom, Lutterworth  
Merchants (last in month)

### Music

Newbold Crown - Open Mic  
(every other)  
Quigleys - Folk Night



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## Tuesday

### Quiz night

The Bear  
Waterside, Hillmorton

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## Wednesday

### Quiz night

George, Bilton  
Royal Oak, Crick  
The Elms, Lutterworth

### Music

Squirrel Inn - live music

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## Thursday

### Quiz night

Town & County Club  
(last in month)  
Admiral Nelson, Braunston  
Friendly Inn, Frankton  
(last in month)  
Lawford Arms



Victoria Inn

Save the White Lion - Pailton  
Village Hall (monthly)

### Music

Town & County Club - jam session  
(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> in month)  
Quigleys - live music  
Knightley Arms, Yelvertoft - folk  
(2<sup>nd</sup> in month)

### Bingo

Royal Oak, Crick

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## Friday

### Quiz night

Boat House, Braunston

### Music

Quigleys - live music  
Prince of Wales - karaoke

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## Saturday

### Music

Quigleys - traditional Irish music  
Prince of Wales - live music  
Squirrel Inn - live music

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## Sunday

### Quiz night

Red Lion, Crick (last in month)  
Red Lion, Kilsby (last in month)  
William Webb Ellis  
Victoria Inn

### Music

Red Lion, Kilsby - open mic  
(1 each month)  
Wheatsheaf, Crick - open mic  
(3<sup>rd</sup> in month)  
Squirrel (most Sundays)

# Join the CAMRA story

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