



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

THE TIPPLER



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

SPRING 2008

FREE

**NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUGHBOROUGH
AND NORTH LEICESTERSHIRE BRANCH OF
THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**

www.loughboroughcamra.org.uk

**LOUGHBOROUGH AND NORTH LEICESTERSHIRE
PUB OF THE YEAR 2008**



THE SWAN IN THE RUSHES, LOUGHBOROUGH

BRANCH DIARY

MAY - 19th; Branch meeting 8pm at The Dew Drop, Hathern

JUNE - 6th; Branch AGM 8pm at the Swan in the Rushes, Loughborough
30th; Branch meeting 8pm at the Anchor, Walton-on-the-Wolds (TBC)

JULY - 14th; Beer festival meeting 8pm at the Tap and Mallet, Loughborough
28th; Branch meeting 8pm at the Greyhound, Burton on the Wolds (TBC)

AUGUST - 4th; Beer festival meeting 8pm at the Tap and Mallet, Loughborough
18th; Branch meeting 8pm at the Curzon Arms, Woodhouse Eaves (TBC)

LOCAL CAMRA BEER FESTIVALS

- **16th - 17th May**; Barrow Hill Roundhouse Festival, nr Chesterfield. Over 120 real ales, as well as ciders, fruit wines and continental bottled beer. Admission £5 in advance, £6 on the gate. Ticket price includes a commemorative glass. FREE bus service between Chesterfield Railway Station (picking up outside the Comet showroom and the Derby Tup) and the Roundhouse. This Bus will run regularly throughout the event. Phone: (01246) 472450, www.barrowhill.org
- **22nd - 24th May**; Lincoln Beer Festival. The Drill Hall, Free School Lane, www.lincolncamra.org.uk
- **23rd - 25th May**; Newark Beer Festival. Riverside Park, Tolney Lane, www.newarkbeerfestival.co.uk
- **29th - 31st May**; 3rd Delapre Abbey Beer Festival, Delapre Abbey, London Rd, Northampton. 150+ Beers + Ciders, Perry + locally produced Wine. Quality food available at all sessions. Open air event with beer marquee. Live bands Fri 9pm, Sat afternoon from 1pm + Sat Eve. Details: Thu 5pm-11pm; Fri Noon-11pm; Sat Noon-11pm.
- **9th-13th July**; Derby Beer Festival, The Assembly Rooms, Market Place www.derbycamra.org.uk
- **5th - 9th August**; Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court, Warwick Road, London, www.camra.org.uk
- **12th - 13th September**; Hinckley Beer Festival, Masonic Hall, St. Mary's Road, Hinckley LE10 1EQ. 40+ Real Ales, plus Ciders, Perries & Fruit Wines www.hinckleyandbosworthcamra.org.uk
- **19th -20th September**; Melton Mowbray Beer Festival, Melton Cattle Market. www.paint-the-town-red.org
- **9th - 11th October**; Quorn Octoberfest, Quorn Village Hall, Quorn, www.loughboroughcamra.org.uk
- **9th - 12th October**; Nottingham "Robin Hood" Beer Festival. Nottingham Castle Grounds. www.nottinghamcamra.org

NON CAMRA BEER FESTIVALS

Organised by Pubs & other bodies etc

- **23rd - 26th May**; Heart of 3 Cities Beer Festival. The Swan in the Rushes, 21 The Rushes, Loughborough, LE11 5BE. www.castlerockbrewery.co.uk
- **23rd - 25th May**; Belper Town FC Beer Festival, Christchurch Meadow, Bridge St, Belper
- **23rd - 26th May**; Bull's Head Beer Festival, 88 Main Street, Nailstone, CV13 0QB, Open 12 - 12 each day 10 Ales, 2 Ciders. Food available all day. Live entertainment Sat & Sun nights. Tel: 01530 261785
- **5th - 7th June**; 2nd Soar Bridge Inn Beer Festival, Bridge Street, Barrow upon Soar. 14 real ales.
- **20th - 21st June**; Out of the Vaults Pub Festival. King St, Leicester. 21 beers.
- **20th - 22nd June**; Welland Valley Beer Festival. Train to Market Harborough and vintage bus from there to pubs in the Vale
- **27th - 28th June**; Syston Social Club Beer Festival, 36 High Street Syston. 15 Beers plus Cider
- **16th - 19th July**; Ye Olde Dolphin Inne Beer Festival, Queen St-Derby
- **18th - 19th July**; Walsall Cricket Club Ashover Brewery Mini Beer Festival, Gorway Rd-Walsall www.walsallcricketclub.com
- **25th - 27th July**; White Post Beer Festival, Belper Rd-Stanley Common

BLUE LION

Thrussington



- Beer Garden and Patio
- Lunches and Evening Meals
- Closed Wednesday Lunchtime

Telephone: BOB AND MANDY 01664 424266

LOUGHBOROUGH 2008 BEER FESTIVAL

The 32nd Loughborough CAMRA Beer Festival was another great success with over 1300 people visiting over the three days. As usual there were many complimentary comments on the beer quality and thanks go to Rob at BEER MY GUEST for his help putting together the beer list and good customer service supplying the beer.

The food was excellent and Liz and her team worked hard to keep the visitors and volunteers well fed. The chicken samosas were particularly popular, with one visitor travelling over 30 miles just for the samosas. Next year we would like to be able to provide a full menu at all sessions so if there are any volunteers out there who would like to help please get in touch.

We rely on volunteers who give up their free time and annual leave to organise and staff the festival. We are a small group and always welcome help from willing volunteers, even if you can only spare a couple of hours.

Our next festival will be 9th - 11th October; Quorn Octoberfest, Quorn Village Hall, Quorn, Loughborough, Leics. For further details see the next Tippler or visit our website

www.loughboroughcamra.org.uk

DEW DROP, HATHERN

LOUGHBOROUGH AND NORTH LEICESTERSHIRE CAMRA
MILD PUB OF THE YEAR 2006

**HARDY'S AND HANSONS BITTER,
GREENE KING XX MILD AND SEASONAL BEERS**
(NOW BREWED BY GREENE KING)

A WARM WELCOME FROM JIM & THE CREW

12-3PM LUNCHTIMES, 6PM-MIDNIGHT WEEKDAYS, 7PM-1AM WEEKENDS

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE TRIP

Northamptonshire is a county which mostly (for me) is terra incognita. I've travelled through it and around it often enough to know its there, but have never explored some of its town's and villages (except some in the Welland valley) to discover the delights of its pubs. This trip was just to dip our toes in the water, and boy was it hot!

Northampton is not one of the easiest towns to get to from Loughborough by train as there is no direct service and the indirect service (via Birmingham or Coventry) will take in excess of 2½ hours. The only routes are train to Kettering or Wellingborough and bus from there to Northampton or if you live south of Loughborough bus to Leicester and bus from there to Northampton. It was decided that using the bus was the best, fastest and cheapest option to take. The direct service from Leicester is the Stagecoach X7 Bus and takes about an hour and twenty minutes to travel the 33 miles from Leicester. Stagecoach offer an explorer ticket priced at £12.00 for two people and is excellent value especially considering that we would be making extensive use of the same ticket to travel around Northamptonshire.

We arrived on time at Northampton Bus Station (voted Britain's ugliest building) but finding the correct way out was a challenge. Still we had about 20 minutes before the first pub (The Malt Shovel) opened and none of us were quite sure where it was, but we all knew that it was opposite the Carlsberg Brewery. After a tentative start, vague recollections of previous visits began to seep back into our memories until we were hot on the scent. Just south of the centre of town all you have to do is look out for a blot on the landscape that is a well-known Keg Brewery. Directly opposite on Bridge Street is the Malt Shovel Tavern. This is an award winning free house (CAMRA East Midland Regional Pub of the Year 2004) and the Brewery Tap for the Great Oakley Brewery. It usually has up to four of their beer available and between us we tried all that were available and there were no complaints concerning the quality and condition of their beers. It was a pleasure to see that there were no less than another 9 hand pumps that were advertising the availability of other interesting beers from microbreweries. These other Breweries beers seldom cross the county boundary in to Leicestershire in included a couple beers from Frog Island, two from Harpers and one from Buntingford. The Oakham Brewery beers were also featured, and for the unadventurous drinker there were a couple of national brews from Fullers and Tetley. With that sort of beer selection it make the Malt Shovel Tavern one of the must visit pubs in Northampton and the couple of hours spent there was far too short, however time was marching on and we had to catch the X4 Stagecoach bus to Wellingborough.

The journey only takes half an hour and although there is a good connection with the X46 Bus to Rushden our next port of call, a comfort break was more important, and the Coach and Horses in Oxford Street was less than five minutes walk away. This newly refurbished pub has recently gained the appreciation of real ale drinkers, as the landlord tries to support local microbreweries where ever possible. There usually up to eight hand pumps on the bar with beer from breweries such as Pot Belly, Great Oakley, Hoggleys etc. The next X46 bus was due in half an hour so there was only time for a swift pint here. It won't be our last visit either as we've made a mental note to return for a more detailed sampling of the beers. Also worth a visit and only a stone's throw away from the Coach and Horses is the Old Grammarians Association. This is a private club; however CAMRA members can gain entrance to the club by showing your current CAMRA membership card. We didn't have time on this occasion but they usually have four regular beers plus up to four guest beers available from microbreweries.

The next hostelry was the Rushden Historical Transport Society and is a private club that is situated right in the centre of Rushden. With Station Approach as its address you would be

correct in thinking that this club had something to do with railways. Rushden Station (originally part of the Midland Railway branch line from Wellingborough to Higham Ferrers) is the basis of the club. It is mainly but not entirely a Railway Preservation Group formed to restore part of the Higham Ferrers Branch Line. They are hoping to run trains to Higham Ferrers within the next two years and all they are waiting for is for the red tape to be sorted out.

The former ladies waiting room has been turned into the members' bar where you will get a warm and friendly welcome. This club which was awarded CAMRA Club of the Year a couple of years ago is an oasis for real ale drinkers. You have to become a day member of the club which costs £1.00, however it more than offset by the competitively priced beers. Generally they have about seven beers from microbreweries all of which were in excellent condition. It was great to see Dark Star beer in this neck of the woods and that was arguably the best beer of the day. There were at least seven real ales available including several beers from the Cottage Brewery. The beer range is constantly changing so you will always be able to find something tickle your taste buds. No only is there seating in the ladies room, but when it gets full there's plenty of seating on the platform. Despite being early February, it was unseasonably warm, and was just like an early spring afternoon. It was very pleasant to sit outside for a while. If the weather had more typical for the season there is a coach parked opposite the entrance to the ladies room which can take the bar overflow. This coach is also home to traditional Northampton Skittles. Northamptonshire Skittles is like a cross between Devil among the tailors and long alley skittles. Great fun to play and we played several legs.

The 2 hours spent there passed in a flash and we had to move on to the last pub we were to visit in that county. From Rushden we caught the M50 bus for the 40 minute journey to Kettering where we were going to visit the Alexandra Arms, the brewery tap for Nobby's Beers which are brewed in the cellar. At least one is always available, however there constantly varying selection of beers. The front bar is decorated with pump clips and it's quite likely that if they've got the pump clip they've had the beer. The rear and larger is home to Northamptonshire Skittles (where some experienced players were obtaining scores we could only in our wildest imagination dream about) and a pool table. The quality and range of the beer here was excellent and we had to leave to catch the train back to Leicester. This is a must visit pub if you find yourself at a loose end in Kettering. The Station at Kettering is about 15 minutes walk from the centre and we were cutting it fine to catch our intended train (particularly as we had to purchase tickets as well) and by the time we were on the platform the train was waiting for us.

Synchronising the arrival of trains and the departure of buses is something that our European friends can do, but we British are incapable of organising. So often as is the case, there was time for a last pint in the Ale Wagon (a much more preferable place to pass time in whilst waiting for a bus than St Margaret's Bus Station) where the Northamptonshire theme continued. The Pot Belly Beijing Black was a most welcome conclusion to the day's trip.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable trip, with lots of potential to linger longer at any other the pubs visited or to discover different ones, and you can be sure that another trip to the wilds of Northamptonshire is on the cards. The travel cost were not excessive, the most expensive leg of the journey was between Kettering and Leicester by train which was essential as the last bus to Leicester had departed from Northampton and there was no way any of us would have remained comfortable on a long bus journey. There are deals to cut transport costs. The Midland Rover from Arriva cost £4.40 to travel all day on their buses in the midlands region except some of the routes with bus numbers beginning with X.

GORDON

VLAD'S SPROUT CURRY

1.5 kilos fresh, green Brussel sprouts (washed and outer leaves removed)
500 ml water
½ x 5 ml spoon salt
25g butter
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 ½ x 5 ml curry powder
½ x 5 ml ground coriander
¼ x 5 ml ground ginger

1. Using a sharp knife, make a small cross in the base of each sprout and place in a large saucepan. Cover with cold, salted water. Leave to soak for 30 minutes. Drain and place in 500ml cold water and ½ teaspoon of salt. Bring to the boil, and then simmer for 15 minutes or until soft. Drain, and mash to a pulp using a potato masher.
2. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large frying pan. Add the onion and cook until transparent but not brown.
3. Add the sprout pulp to the frying pan and stir over a low heat until the sprouts are heated through.
4. Stir in the curry powder, ground coriander and ginger, and cook for a further 15 minutes.
5. Serve piping hot accompanied by scotch eggs on a bed of wholegrain brown rice.

WARNING: - This recipe was obtained from other sources and I accept no responsibility for any anti-social consequences from eating this recipe. If all else fails it is guaranteed to cure constipation so do not wear light coloured trousers.

A lethal suggestion for a sweet to go with this dish would be a rhubarb crumble.

Not Even Interesting, Logical or Sensible trivia quiz

Q1 - In which film would you find Ashley and Melanie Wilkes?

Q2 – Who had albums called ‘Step Two’ and ‘Red Star’?

Q3 –Which brewer has produced, amongst others, beers called ‘Fine Soft Day’ and ‘Róisín Dubh’?

Q4 – Which team plays their home games at a ground called ‘The Willows’?

Q5 – Why did Gregory Pinkus’ invention really upset the rubber companies

Answers to the questions in the previous Tippler:

Q1:ON BANK NOTES, Q2;THE GRAF SPEE, Q3;WINSTON CHURCHILL,Q4;JOHN PEEL, Q5;JOHN CHRISTIE

HARRY'S CORNER

In which town or city are these
breweries

Q1 - Silly

Q2 - Liefmans

Q3 - De Koninck

Q4 - Cantillon

Q5 - Malheur

Answers to the last issues
questions

Q1- **Angleur**

Q2- **Brussels**

Q3- **Antwerp**

Q4- **Geraardsbergen**

Q5- **Ghent**

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MAY MEANDERING

With everyone else otherwise engaged on the first Saturday in May, it was up to Ralph and I to represent the branch at the Willoughby Arms Beer Festival at Little Bytham. We left Loughborough at 09.30 on the no.8 bus to Grantham via Melton Mowbray. If you are very sad this is a bargain at £4 for 1 hour and 40 minutes of meandering through every village you can think of (and a few you've never heard of).

Eventually Grantham was reached and we set out to sample the undiscovered delights that make up Grantham's GBG entries. The first stop was the Blue Bull (listed as the Blue Bell in the GBG). This was the only GBG pub except Wetherspoons open at 11am and only had one beer available – a very tired Grantham Mowbray's Mash.

After a very brief visit we set off for the Lord Harrowby on Dudley Road which stocked Tom Wood's Bitter, Bombardier and a couple of Milestone brews. From there it was just round the corner to intercept the Kimes no.4 bus to Stamford via Little Bytham. After passing through yet more unchartered territory we were dropped off outside the much missed former Mallard pub in Little Bytham.

A 15 minute walk took us to the Willoughby Arms which is situated opposite the old station on the East Coast main line (pity it's not still open). The pub is next to the Newby Wyke Brewery which bizarrely doesn't supply any beer to the pub. There were 16 beers on gravity and 6 more on the bar. The festival beers were from the South-West and the regulars included two from the local Ufford brewery.

We had a 10 minute walk towards Stamford to intercept the bus at Careby. There was just time for chips in Stamford before catching the 17.07 train to Leicester, arriving at 17.50, followed by a walk to St. Margaret's to catch the Arriva 127 to Birstall. For the first time ever we cursed the bus not going through the village, as we weaved our way almost to Wanlip before finally arriving at Longslade school where Birstall Rugby Club were holding their first beer festival. Beers were available from Bees, Steamin' Billy, Langton, Parish, Wicked Hathern and Rugby. All too soon it was time to trek back across Birstall and catch the last bus to finish off in the Blacksmith's Arms in Quorn where the Banks' Bitter has just been replaced by an excellent pint of Marston's Burton Bitter.

Fiona

BILL & BRENDA

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THE BLACKSMITHS ARMS

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12-3, 7-10.30 SUN

WELL BEHAVED DOGS WELCOME

THE JOLLY SAILOR

We recently had the sad news that Peter Frame has sold the Jolly Sailor at Hemington to Greene King. Peter and Margaret retired at the end of April after 18 years at the Sailor and sterling work in the trade (they were previously at Derby's Old Spa Inne in the 1980s). The rumour was that the pub was to be used as a training pub for new Greene King tenants. This appears not to be the case as the branch have received the following email from the new licensee

Dear Camra,

I would like to inform all that I will become the Licensee of the Jolly Sailor, Hemington on Tuesday 29 April. I am immensely proud - and very nervous at the prospect of looking after this fine house and I know Peter Frame will be a hard act to follow!

For info, I am a CAMRA member and have a keen interest in the preservation of fine pubs - this interest is also my "day time" occupation as currently, I am a Property Surveyor with Greene King and previously carried out the same role with Hardys & Hansons but I will be giving this up to concentrate on my life changing decision.

So, to my plans for the future, I am please to assure that the Jolly Sailor will remain just as it is now other than for minor sympathetic TLC. There may be the occasional TV for important events such as the Rugby World Cup etc but that will only be if the customers want it! (My Sunday night fix of Top Gear will have to be recorded when it returns) I will continue to supply as many well kept cask ales as space on the bar will allow and the range will be as diverse as possible - I hope you will all be pleasantly surprised?

Food is important and will consist of good quality, home cooked, simple pub grub which will be on offer Monday to Saturday lunchtimes only (as at present).

It's been a tough and brave decision on mine and my wife's part, but we are very excited about the coming weeks and months. It is a tough time for the industry generally as we all know but with hard work, some kind weather and a little bit of luck the Jolly Sailor should be fine.

So here's to new beginnings, new friends and the Jolly Sailor.

Cheers,

Gary Dinsdale

PUB NEWS

- Steamin' Billy Brewery beers are now being brewed under contract by Tower Brewery at Burton on Trent, as are Hoskins Brothers beers.
- Wicked Hathern Brewery beers are now being brewed using the facilities at Leek Brewery
- Mark, the licensee at the Plough, Loughborough has left (caused by unfavourable leasing terms). The pub is now being run by Kelly who used to work for Mark.
- John Mallet is the new landlord at the Britannia, Shepshed.
- The building works at The Railway, Coleorton have now started.

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Guest beers
(Cask Marque)

Snooker table, Pub games
Live music Saturday nights.
Draught beer at low prices.

CAMRA members and non
members welcome

MORE PUB NEWS

- The Bull and Mouth in Mountsorrel is reopening as the 'Slate' bar and restaurant. Not sure about real ale
- The Mint, Mountsorrel has closed.
- The White Horse at Seagrave has a new owner. No reports yet.
- Tina & Paul Stevens are the new tenants at The Greyhound, Burton on the Wolds. They have contacted the branch about getting involved with CAMRA. The first few reports we've had back are good. More details hopefully next time
- Rumours surround the Star at Thrussington, which has been closed for some time. Apparently a former local landlord has put in a bid for it. Watch this space!
- The Trap in Barrow-upon-Soar has a new landlord. No reports yet.
- Something is afoot in Kegworth. There are rumours that the Britania is to become a Chinese restaurant and the Oddfellows is to close. Also possible changes at the Anchor. Any information gratefully received.

Pubs nominated for 2009 Good Beer Guide

These are the pubs nominated for inclusion in the 2009 CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Nomination does not guarantee inclusion as the final selection is at the discretion of the editor and dependant on space

Barrow upon Soar	Soar Bridge Inn
Castle Donington	Jolly Potters
Cavendish Bridge	Old Crown
Diseworth	Plough Inn
Hathern	Dew Drop
Kegworth	Red Lion
Loughborough	Albion Inn
Loughborough	Paget Arms
Loughborough	Swan in the Rushes
Loughborough	Tap and Mallet
Mountsorrel	Swan Inn
Mountsorrel	Waterside Inn
Quorn	Blacksmith's Arms
Quorn	White Hart
Thringstone	George and Dragon
Thrusington	Blue Lion
Walton on the Wolds	Anchor Inn
Whitwick	Three Horseshoes
Woodhouse Eaves	Curzon Arms
Woodhouse Eaves	Wheatsheaf

CAMRA NATIONAL BEER SCORING SCHEME

These are the guidelines devised by CAMRA for scoring real ale quality. All pubs nominated for inclusion in the Good Beer Guide are judged against these scores. We rely on the participation of members sending in survey forms so feel free to cut these out, photocopy them etc they are also available on the CAMRA website and on leaflets at beer festivals, pubs etc. Return them to the Editor, Secretary or Regional Director ASAP. There is now also an online form which can be submitted at <http://www.beerscoring.org.uk>

0 Undrinkable. No cask ale available or so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.

1 Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.

2 Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

3 Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

4 Very good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.

5 Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme

Surveyor _____

Mem. No. _____ Date of survey ___/___/___

Pub _____

Location _____

GBG County/Area _____ Score 0-5 _____

Beer _____ (optional)

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**GUIDE TO
GOOD BEER
IN**

**LOUGHBOROUGH
AND
NORTH WEST
LEICESTERSHIRE**



2005

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Closing date for articles and adverts for next issue: JUNE 30TH 2008

Anyone wishing to become more involved in branch activities or join in social events would be made very welcome. More information on CAMRA and its local branches can be obtained from its web site:

www.camra.org.uk . Branch website; www.loughboroughcamra.org.uk

For information on Loughborough and North Leicestershire branch, contact the Secretary, Gordon Smith on 0116 2374685 or lbocamra@googlemail.com

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Excursions into deepest Derbyshire

Owing to the continuing unavailability (regular trips to the 'caravan of love'), the perceived incapacity (oh my knee) and uncertainty (once I was indecisive now I just can't make up my mind) of my regular companion for these jaunts it has been necessary to recruit substitute(s). Regular interviews as to suitability e.g. reasonably fit, likes a pint, etc were carried out usually in the Dewdrop, Hathern. Jim the landlord keeps arguably the best pint for miles around, setting a bench mark for others to aspire to and even the demise of Kimberly brewery has not changed the quality. The best bitter has lost that distinctive Nottingham bitterness and is blander than previously but the Olde Trip is still the same. Guest ales tend to come from the Green King stable and the last was that poor imitation of the original – Ruddles County. However this is still a genuine real pub.

Having elected on a trip it was a pleasure to introduce an old friend to some of those splendid Derbyshire attractions and the first choice was the station café at Grindleford - it was a long time since we had breakfast in a tent at Millers dale fortified with strong Wensleydale cheese and pickled onions – the latter are now off the menu for me owing to those unsociable side effects. This was after a session the night before in the Railway Inn – long since defunct and now a private house.

We walked along the Derwent to Calver detouring to the Bridge Inn which was also a Kimberley house for sustenance and then the road climb up onto Froggat Edge with its splendid views of the valley below, returning to the café just in time for the train into Sheffield. Onto the tram to the stop at Shalesmoor and immediately into the Cask & Cutler (now reverting to its original name the Wellington since being run by Richard ----- well known to L'boro CAMRA members from his time here in L'boro). The beer range is still just as varied with some you don't immediately recognise.

From there to the Fat Cat where apart from the steak pie my friend has taken a particular liking to Kelham Island Easy Rider and on departure having purchased a supply of bottles was carrying more of this in his rucksack than his belly!

A slow amble back to the tram due to the effects of consumption and then the train to round off another splendid day in Derbyshire.

Wandering Wal

Marcia and staff welcome you to

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Sun 12-4pm

COVENTRY BEER FESTIVAL AND RUGBY

Seasoned travellers amongst you will know that it is virtually impossible to travel between Leicester and Coventry by train, so for our visit to Coventry Beer Festival we were forced to resort to the bus. This will also become more difficult from the end of May when Arriva withdraw the X6 service, as the alternative Stagecoach no.48 takes over 2 hours (compared with 1hour) to reach Coventry.

We left Leicester on the 09.40 X6, having been issued a ticket that Arriva customer services had told me didn't exist anymore! Arrival into Coventry was at 10.50 with time to visit a couple of pubs before the festival opened.

Dave led us on a tour of the precinct before finally reaching a recognisable landmark; Spon Street. This street comprises of many medieval houses that have been moved from other locations to preserve them. Just round the corner is the Gatehouse Tavern which stocks Church End beers and is well known as a sports orientated pub. Leaving there we negotiated the ring road, and passed the Rugby ground where the beer festival is held, to visit the Craven Arms. The main mission here was to sample the Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby which is a regular. On arriving we found they were also having a mini beer festival which gave some people the excuse to have another pint. Eventually they were dragged out kicking and screaming to get the trip back on schedule. On arriving at the beer festival we met up with Neil who had needed a lie in so caught a later bus.

After a couple of hours, and some new beers later, we left to catch the train to Rugby. A long uphill walk led us to the Victoria which is the Atomic Brewery tap. Between us we tried the whole range before making our way to the Merchants Inn which had featured in a recent 'What's Brewing'

As usual, when visiting the West Midlands, we were amazed to see how cheap the beer was. One day some one will convince me that there is some logical reason why our local beers are 30p cheaper 40+ miles away. Until that day, I will remain convinced that someone is taking the p**s.

The final pub was the Alexandra Arms, tucked in the backstreets. By this stage of the day it all becomes a bit hazy. I can't remember what the beers were, but I think we enjoyed them. I do remember the friendly locals and one of the dogs taking a shine to the Master.

A steady downhill walk took us back to the railway station to find that our train was cancelled and the next one was too late to catch our last bus from Coventry. I unsuccessfully tried to get some help from the station staff who didn't seem interested as it was a different company and 'not their problem'. We ended up catching the next train then getting taxis between the railway station and bus station to ensure we made the connection.

In Leicester we decided to catch the next bus towards Loughborough and stop off at the Swan in Mountsorrel. In hindsight, this possibly wasn't such a good idea as someone decided to sample the excellent Old peculiar, got quite animated and had to be told to "SHUT UP BRIAN" on numerous occasions. He was last seen heading to Loughborough on the last bus, following instructions to the driver to throw him off within crawling distance of the Swan. Total cost of transport approx - £17.50

Fiona

TOWN PUB OF THE YEAR 2007

ALBION INN

Canal Bank, Loughborough,
Leicestershire, LE11 1QA
Tel: 01509 213952

**OPEN: 11-3 (4 Sat), 6-11 Mon-Sat;
12-3, 7-10.30 Sun**

**REGULAR BEERS: Sharps Doom Bar;
Wicked Hathern Dobels Dog Mild,
Albion Special; guest beer [H]**



This canal side pub was built in the late 18th century at the same time as the Loughborough Canal. There is a bar, darts room and quiet lounge. Outside there is a patio which houses an aviary. The house beer is brewed specially for the pub by the local Wicked Hathern Brewery. Care should be taken if driving to the pub along the tow path

PUB OF THE YEAR 2008

THE SWAN IN THE RUSHES

www.castlerockbrewery.co.uk/pub-swanintherushes.html

21, The Rushes, Loughborough,
Leicestershire, LE11 5BE
Tel: 01509 217014

OPEN: 11-11 (12 Fri, Sat); 12 to 11 Sun

**REGULAR BEERS: Adnams Bitter;
Castle
Rock Harvest Pale, Hemlock; Hop Back
Summer Lightning, guest beers [H]**



Formally known as The Charnwood, The Swan was one of Tynmill's earliest pubs, opening in 1986. A traditional 3 room pub consisting of two quiet, comfortable rooms and the Charnwood Vaults, a lively room with a juke box and wooden bench seating. There is a constantly changing range of up to 6 guest beers, one of which is always a mild, as well as real cider and perry, a limited range of continental bottled and draught beers and a good range of malt whiskies and country wines. Upstairs there is a skittle alley/function room which hosts live music and the twice yearly beer festivals. There is also an upstairs smoker's terrace. The Swan was also branch 'Town Pub of the Year 2006'

MOST IMPROVED PUB OF THE YEAR 2007



PAGET ARMS

41 OXFORD STREET, LOUGHBOROUGH, LE11 5DP (01509) 266216

SIX REAL ALES

(INCL GUEST ALES AND GRAVITY FED)

FRESH HOME COOKED FOOD

(USING LOCAL PRODUCE WHERE EVER POSSIBLE)

AWARD WINNING 12" STONE BAKED ITALIAN PIZZA'S

JUST AWARDED MOST IMPROVED PUB OF THE YEAR

STEAMIN BILLY'S BOTTLED BEER SHOP, WITH 30 BRITISH BEERS, 10 EUROPEAN BEERS AND 10 CIDERS, CASES AND SPLIT MIXED CASES, AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL SALES TO TAKE AWAY. OPENING APRIL 2008

OPEN: 12-3, 5-11 Mon-Thurs;
12-12 Fri-Sun

www.myspace.com/thepaget

REGULAR BEERS: **Steamin' Billy Bitter,**
Skydiver plus guest beers [H] & [G]

Located in the centre of terraced houses, this former Everard's pub has been tastefully improved and is now one of Steamin' Billy's locals. It has 6 real ales. Some are served by gravity, directly from the cellar. Home cooked food includes pizzas and doorstep sandwiches. There are two separate rooms with ample seating and a large enclosed garden with a heated, covered area, suitable for smokers. Regular beer festivals are held.

