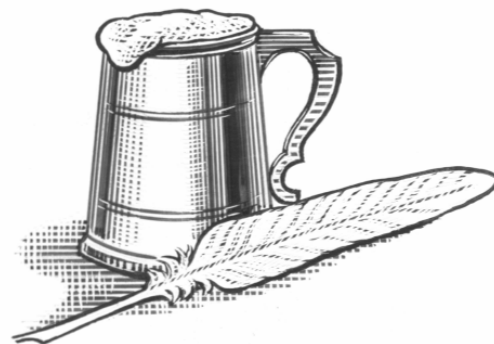


# British Guild of Beer Writers

Newsletter - September 2004

## Chairman



Garret Oliver, new Guild member Gill Shaffer and committee member Martyn Cornell capture the mood of the Guild reception.

Great to see so many Guild members and corporate members upstairs at the White Horse for our eve-of-GBBF reception. It's become an integral part of the Great British Beer Festival, that invariably sweltering evening with its rich concoction of class mainstream and specialty beers, the 'Camra-aderie' of home and abroad beer writers and producers, and the sense of anticipation of what lies ahead when Olympia's doors are flung open the next day. As ever, we were indebted to Mark Dorber, for his generous hospitality - and also to all the corporate members who kindly donated their beers to the occasion. Thanks to you one and all.

The festival itself proved its usual mixture of the exasperating and the exhilarating. Exasperating because at a time when beer is trying to raise its image, there's something perverse about announcing the supreme winners over a sound system that Moses would have scorned, about booing a great brewer which produces a classic IPA, and about a hall whose antiquated superstructure granted easy access to the torrential rain that accompanied the first evening's thunderbolts. Exhilarating because the beers were wonderful and plentiful, the people behind the award winners were as joyful to behold as their work was to sample, the public flowed in enthusiastically and the trade crowd let down their hair as enthusiastically and cordially as ever.

### Tangled Web

The Guild website has been a bone of contention for a while now, but I am pleased to report that, thanks to Tim Hampson's endeavours, we are there. You can now find us in hyperspace by going to [www.beerwriters.co.uk](http://www.beerwriters.co.uk) if you didn't already know. Very well deserved thanks to Tim.

### Turfed out?

The Guild trip to Brakspears reminds me that I was in Oxford itself recently and visited for the first time - to my shame - the Turf Tavern. Following shame came amazement, for this wonderful pub, with 10 stupendous guest beers was a Laurel managed house. Laurel's policy when they got hold of Hogs Head was to reduce the ale choice, but here they'd let it flourish in excelsis. I mention this because the Turf has just been taken over by Greene King, that excellent brewer I mentioned earlier, which is usually very keen to provide its own ales and no others in its estate. I do hope that they are able to find more flexibility in the way they handle this little gem. **Andrew Pring - Chairman**

### Chairman

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# SEC SAYS

A newsletter, of late, would not be complete unless I informed you of a change in my circumstances, and this month's is no exception. Indeed there are two changes. However, on this occasion you need not amend your records.

On May 10th I took myself off to the Guinness social club at Park Royal and there I sat my IGoB General Certificate of Brewing papers. I am glad to say that I passed, and since I have also been brewing of late I have asked my colleagues if this entitles me to call myself a brewer. Most happily they tell me that it does, which peer group recognition I regard as even more important than the receipt of the very welcome IGoB certificate.

The other change is rather more significant, though I do not anticipate it will affect the amount of time that I will be spending on Guild matters, and I have asked my committee colleagues whether they foresee any conflict of interest (they do not). Following significant equity injections into the Meantime Brewing Company by a number of shareholders I have been appointed to the board, where I shall have responsibility for marketing, PR and internal communications.

Having been present at the birth of Meantime, this is very much a dream come true as I have long been waiting for the company to grow to a size where I can start to play a bigger role. I still intend to enter the Guild awards however, and will be starting a new book project this autumn.

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# News

## GUILD'S WEBSITE - WWW.BEERWRITERS.CO.UK

The British Guild of Beer Writers new web site is up and running. In it can be found the cream of the country's beer media experts - be they journalists, authors, producers, photographers, illustrators or public relations people. Somewhere in the pages editors and commissioning editors can find a beer professional who can answer any questions they have, produce any articles needed, take any pictures required and generally inform about any and all aspects of this extraordinary product.

The site currently includes sections on news, membership list, how to join, newsletters, forthcoming events and the awards, and I am sure that the Committee would welcome suggestions for other sections which could be added over the coming months and years.

The site will be accessed via [www.beerwriters.co.uk](http://www.beerwriters.co.uk), the Committee decided to change its name from [www.beerguild.co.uk](http://www.beerguild.co.uk) as the new name is more appropriate to what we do - write about beer however, we still currently continue to register the old name for at least 12 months. As the first thing I expect people to do is to check their own entry in the directory, the information is as taken from the current paper directory. Any corrections should be sent directly to our Secretary, who I am sure will look sympathetically upon them if they are accompanied by a subscription for 2005.

Finally, special thanks should go to Cask Marque who sponsored the site's design and development. As part of the deal a link to it has been included on every page.

A press release announcing the site's launch has been sent to more than 700 editors of newspapers, magazines, radio and tv programmes.

**Tim Hampson**

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### NOMINATIONS WANTED

Our annual dinner is not just the occasion for the Beer Writer of the Year Award, but is also the venue for the announcement of the winner of the British Beer and Brewing Award.

Nominations are sought from the membership to honour the individual or company who has done most for beer in the past year.

Members of the Guild are ineligible for nomination. Nominations need to be with the Secretary by Monday 25th October.

Similarly anyone wishing to contribute copy to the 2005 Guild Directory is very welcome to do so. The theme is why there should be more beer writing on British print and other media.

### CORPORATE LINKS

If you are a corporate member please have a look at the Guild website and check that there is a correct and active link to your own brewery website,

We would also be grateful if you could arrange for a link to the Guild's site from your own. This is because the algorithms used by search engines such as the mighty Google will rate you higher the more often you are pointed to by other websites.

Please also send us your company press releases. We cannot promise to put them on all on the Guild's news pages, but, where appropriate, we shall certainly try.

### BREMNER PENS HIS LAST RELEASE

Long time Guild Secretary, Barry Bremner, has written his last press release, which, fittingly enough, announces his retirement. Working in PR since demob from national service Barry is best known for his association with McMullens, which commenced on April Fool's day 1985. We wish him well.

# Visits

## BRAKSPEARS

The return of Brakspear's beers to their original home county of Oxfordshire has been one of the great positive stories of recent brewing (writes Adrian Tierney-Jones).

After the demise of the Henley brewery in 2002, Refresh UK bought the rights to the brands and announced that they would be looking for a site in Oxfordshire where they could start brewing. In the meantime, Brakspear's beers were brewed at Burtonwood. This summer, though, Brakspear's beers came home to Oxfordshire and Guild members recently enjoyed a visit to the Wychwood Brewery at Witney where Refresh UK have their HQ.

The purpose of the visit was to hear the story of the return home of Brakspear's great beers from Refresh UK's chief executive Rupert Thompson,



who has built up a formidable brewing concern with both Wychwood and Brakspear's beers being brewed in Witney; Refresh UK also own the rights to the likes of Lowenbräu, Bangla and Usher's. It is a story of perseverance and faith as Brakspear's original Henley plant was stored in readiness for the time when a suitable site could be found. After a couple of false starts, Refresh UK manage to get hold of a space next to their Wychwood site in Witney and the kit

began moving in this year. This included the famous double drop system, which, along with Maris Otter malt, English Goldings and Fuggles and the unique and complex Brakspear yeast, all help to replicate the richness and flavour of the original beers. It's a great positive story which is backed up by the excellence of Brakspear's Bitter and Special. A tour and a tasting in the tap room followed and then we repaired to the Butchers Arms where company members joined us for sandwiches as well as more Brakspear's Bitter and Wychwood's rich and dark Hobgoblin. Thanks to Rupert Thompson and his staff for making us feel so welcome.

Members present: Adrian Tierney-Jones, Nick Redman, Tim Hampson, Steve Sharples, Peter Haydon, Roy Bailey, Les Baynton, Paul Nunny, Iain Loe, John White

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## WHAT'S ON IN THE BEER BUSINESS

### 2004

September 26 - 28	InterBev 2004, Orlando, Florida
September 30 - Oct 2	23rd Great American Beer Festival, Denver, Colorado
November 12 - 21	20th Mid Wales Beer Festival, Llanwrtyd Wells
December 1	BGBW Annual Dinner & Awards Presentation, Ironmongers' Hall, London
December 7-8	IWEX 2004 (Industrial Water Ex) Birmingham NEC
December 10 (?)	Parliamentary Beer Group AGM & Christmas Party
December 16	ALMR Christmas Luncheon

### 2005

March 13- 16	IFE 05, ExCel, London
April 1-2	Helsinki Beer Festival, Calbe Factory
April 21	Interpak 2005 - Dusseldorf
June 22	Guild AGM - Brook Green Hotel
August 1	Guild's Annual Pre-Great British Beer Festival Reception, White Horse
August 2 - 6	Great British Beer Festival
September 12 - 17	World Fair for Beverage Technology, Munich

# More Visits 'n' Bits

## GUILD AWARDS

Nominations and entries are being sort for the Guild Awards' three categories.

**British Guild of Beer Writers' Gold Tankard for National Journalism** - includes the national press, consumer magazines, national television and radio and internet. First prize of £1,000 and a runner-up will receive a silver award and £500 in prize money sponsored by Greene King.

**British Guild of Beer Writers' Gold Tankard for Regional Journalism** - includes local and regional newspapers, radio and television and CAMRA newsletters. First prize of £1,000 and a runner-up will receive a silver award and £500 in prize money sponsored by Greene King.

**The British Guild of Beer Writers' Gold Tankard for Trade and Technical Journalism.** First prize of £1,000 and a runner-up will receive a silver award and £500 in prize money sponsored by Greene King.

One of these three Gold winners will be named as the British Guild of Beer Writers' Beer Writer of the Year.

In addition there is the **Budvar Travel Bursary** for the best article published in English on an overseas beer matters with a prize of £1,000 plus a trip to the brewery in the Czech Republic - sponsored by Budweiser Budvar.

Entrants do not have to be members of the British Guild of Beer Writers they just have to

communicate about beer or beer culture, new products or the ingredients and brewing of beer.

There is no limitation on the number of categories that an individual may enter, but they may only submit four examples of their work in an individual category.

To enter the competition send four copies of each entry, published or broadcast in the 12 months up to 30 September 2003, by 8 October to Beer Writers Competition, c/o Morrice Partnership Ltd, IT Centre, York Science Park, Heslington, York YO10 5DG. Website entries, send web address only.

Entries can only be returned if accompanied with a self-addressed, stamped envelope or packaging.

The winners will be announced at the British Guild of Beer Writers famous Beer Banquet annual dinner at Ironmongers' Hall, in London in December.

The judges will accept nominations for someone else's work. The judges, decision is final.

All legitimate entrants will receive a gift pack of a Greene King beer, sent after the results are announced in December, and in addition non guild members will be given six months free membership to the British Guild of Beer Writers beginning in December 2005.

For more information on the British Guild of Beer Writers Awards contact Tim Hampson Tel: 07768 614283

## POSSIBLE VISIT TO BAMBERG

Guild member John White, of White Beer Travels, has offered to organise a trip to Bamberg next July, should there be sufficient interest. There are ten official breweries/brew pubs in the town, the most famous being Heller, which brews the world-class Schlenkerla Rauchbier (Smoke Beer) ([www.smokebeer.com](http://www.smokebeer.com)).

Schlenkerla is one of the world's greatest taverns and John has secured a visit to sample the beer and its excellent food, preceded by a visit to the Heller Brewery and its maltings, which will include a tasting of the unfiltered beer deep down in the sandstone lagering caves below the brewery. Schlenkerla is fully covered on [www.whitebeertravels.com/schlenkerla](http://www.whitebeertravels.com/schlenkerla).

The trip would be for four nights, commencing Saturday, the 23rd of July. There would a charge for the trip. We would get to Bamberg via a flight from Stansted to Nuremberg typically costing between £70 and £100 return, depending on how early the booking is made. Bamberg is very easily reached from Nuremberg by train. There are two options for hotels.

The trip to Heller Brewery and the food and drink in the Schlenkerla will be free of charge, and John is working on other visits. A possible is the new brew pub, that only opened in August, the Gasthausbrauerei Ambräusianum, covered on [www.whitebeertravels.com/news](http://www.whitebeertravels.com/news). Please register interest with John via his site.

