

# *British Guild Of Beer Writers*

## *Newsletter November 2011*



***FOR THE last couple of years the numbers attending our annual awards dinner have been increasing — it is now a must attend event for many people with a love for beer, drawn together by the lure of good conversation, the company of friends and the marriage of a imaginative food with great beer.***

This year our dinner takes place on December 1 at the Plaza River Bank opposite the Houses of Parliament. It really does look like it is going to be a sell-out, even though we have room for more people than last year. We have already had to start a waiting list. My hope is that we will find space to get everyone in, but if you do want to come and haven't yet bought a ticket, NOW is the time to contact Angie at Cask Marque ([angie@cask-marque.co.uk](mailto:angie@cask-marque.co.uk)) to make sure you are on the list.

February 28 2012 is the date fixed for our Brewing Materials Seminar, to be held in the Worthington Suite at

the National Brewery Centre, in Burton-on-Trent. We are also going to arrange a trip around Shobnall Maltings the day before the conference and in the evening will have a tour of some of town's finest pubs, just to set the scene. Full details of the speakers have yet to be confirmed but the "stella" line-up is likely to include Sharps brewer Stuart Howe, Hall & Woodhouse's Toby Heasman and hop guru Paul Corbett of Charles Faram. More details to follow.

Hopefully, all members will have now received their copy of the British Beer and Pub Association's excellent *Statistical Handbook*, which now comes as part of the Guild's membership package. If you haven't received it, please let me know.

And finally, congratulations to Guild members Melissa Cole, Adrian-Tierney Jones and Jeff Evans – all of whom have had a book published in the last few weeks. **Tim Hampson**

### ***Why join the Guild?***

'THIS IS convivial, isn't it?' said Adrian Tierney-Jones, long-serving

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CHAIRMAN: Tim Hampson Tel: 01865 245711; 07768 614283 [tim@infopub.co.uk](mailto:tim@infopub.co.uk)

TREASURER: Paul Nunny [paul@nunny.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:paul@nunny.fsbusiness.co.uk)

SECRETARY: Adrian Tierney-Jones Woodcote, 2 Jury Road, Dulverton, Somerset TA22 9DU  
Tel: 01398 324314 [tierneyjones@btinternet.com](mailto:tierneyjones@btinternet.com)

*[www.beerwriters.co.uk](http://www.beerwriters.co.uk)*

Secretary of our venerable Guild, rather taking me by surprise. We were sitting in the Poechenellekelder bar in Brussels, one of ATJ's top ten bars of the world, and convivial though it undoubtedly was, at the end of a long, hot day touring the capital of Europe's beer highlights, it wasn't the top of my list of reasons for joining the Guild.

The stated aim on the Guild website is 'To improve standards of beer writing and extend the public knowledge of beer'. I joined for the dinner. Well, that's not strictly true; I'd set myself a goal to get to the Annual Awards Dinner as a way of spurring me on to writing my blog. I hoped to get tugged along in the slipstream of inspiration from fellow members to improve my own standards of beer writing. But here I was, little more than a year later, drinking aged Orval with Chairman Tim Hampson, and fellow members that included current Beer Writer of the Year, Simon Jenkins, and talking about 'The Future' of beer writing.

I must admit, at the beginning of the day, meeting at St Pancras, and checking in to Eurostar, I felt a little daunted by the company, but on the whole, rather privileged. Having access to that kind of professional experience in beer journalism, though, is really rather a treat. And my views on writing, beer and the Guild were genuinely welcomed. Doubts of inexperience were left behind as we sped along through the Channel Tunnel. The two other members of our party, Marverine Cole and Mark Fletcher, come from a slightly different octave of the beer-writing spectrum. Marverine (aka Beer Beauty) is a broadcaster, and Mark (aka Fletch the Monkey) is quite the web marketing and social media whizz. Both have established blog and Twitter

followings, and both gave me plenty of insight and ideas.

Over the weekend we swapped anecdotes about figures we have met in the industry: what Garrett Oliver is like to work with, discussing the relative merits of Frank Zappa and The Fall with Fullers' John Keeling, pet hates and loves... I pick up pointers on how to pitch an idea for an article, what it takes to pull a book together, how often to blog and the effects of Twitter on Google ranking. I share whatever I can: what we can learn from Scandinavia, the overlap between brewing and distilling.

This weekend was the Guild in concentrated form. And it's not (just) the conviviality of beer geeks together; there's that shared aim. The love of beer draws us together, but in this crowd it's more than that. Spreading the word about beer is our passion, and the Guild just helps me to do it better. **Jerry Bartlett**

### *Strictly Tap*

THE TEAM behind Tap East, Microbrewery and Bar are pleased to announce that following the re-commissioning of a 2.5 barrel plant bought from Bitter End Brewery in Cockermonth, they will be launching the inaugural Tap East beer, a 6.5% Extra Stout, on Wednesday November 9 from 4pm. Situated in the brand new Westfield complex at Stratford, the nearest transport is the Stratford International

#### **CALENDAR 2011/12**

- Czech Beer Festival @ the Porterhouse, Covent Garden November 17-27
- BGBW Awards and Dinner, London December 1
- National Winter Ales Festival, Manchester, January 18-21

**Please send details of any relevant events to Adrian Tierney-Jones**

DLR stop. Directors Mike Hill, Richard Dinwoodie, Eddie Baines and Glyn Roberts hope you will all be able to join them at the launch of the latest brewery to hit London. If you would like more information on this event you can follow us on Twitter @TapEast or 'Like' us on Facebook. Alternatively you can call Glyn Roberts on 07900 433 309.

### *The Knowledge*

A NEW edition of Jeff Evans' *Book of Beer Knowledge* is now available, a 'treasure trove' of information about beer, including tons of information both valuable and useless, from the world's biggest brewers and the most popular hops to the beer in Australia brewed for dogs and a bike that doubles up as a bar for parties. Lists, facts, tables, feats, records, stats and anecdotes in one handy, extremely reasonably priced volume. On sale now at just £7.99.

### *Moorhouse's invitation*

MOORHOUSE'S BREWERY has issued an open invitation to Guild members to visit the brand new £4.2m brewing complex in Burnley. The development, which was officially launched earlier this year, means that the much acclaimed 'Pendle Witches' brewery now has a production capacity of 1000 barrels a week — triple the output of the old brewery — to give it regional status. Many more special ales are being brewed and all five core brands are now bottled. The complex includes a visitor centre and meeting rooms for events. Any Guild members wishing to enjoy a tour and tasting early next year, either individually or in groups, should first contact Steve Hobman at [shobman@rhinopr.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:shobman@rhinopr.freeserve.co.uk).

### *Rennet pass me one more time*

THE BEER ACADEMY has announced a Festival of British Beer & Cheese featuring Caledonian Brewery, Everards, Fuller Smith & Turner, Greene King, Meantime, Shepherd Neame and Young's, with more to be announced. The cheese merchants will include Paxton & Whitfield, Milklink and Goodwood Cheese, with more to be announced. The Festival will provide an opportunity for attendees to explore and discover the art of beer and cheese matching, and see how beer & cheese work so well together as natural partners. It will take place in the magnificent hall of the Worshipful Company of Brewers. Visitors will have the opportunity to sample a wide range of beers and cheeses, meet the producers and enjoy the company of fellow beer enthusiasts. There will be three 90-minute visitor sessions at the following times: 12:00-13:30; 14:30-16:00; 16:30-18:00.

**Date: November 25, 2011;** venue: Brewers Hall, Aldermanbury Square, London EC2V 7HR. Tickets are only £15 per person.

To book contact Dan Cannas: 0207 499 8144 or [dan.cannas@beeracademy.co.uk](mailto:dan.cannas@beeracademy.co.uk)

### **SELECTED BEER ACADEMY DATES**

**November 15**

**How to Judge Beer,  
The George Bristol**

Go to [www.beeracademy.co.uk](http://www.beeracademy.co.uk) for details

### *Abbey Ale*

WHERE CAN you visit a stately home that is not open to the public, eat artisanal food where they teach baking, butchery and cheese making

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS  
DECEMBER 5, 2011**

and sup traditional ale hand crafted under the tutelage of BGBW member Dave Wickett — only by attending Guild visits!!!

This particular visit was to the Welbeck Abbey Brewery in the Motor Yard within the enormous historic surroundings of Welbeck Abbey near Worksop (north of Watford). A recycled 10-barrel traditional all malt and hops brewery that spawned Pale Rider was reinstalled and been running since May 2011. The team of two with Claire Monk as the head brewster make three main brands — Ernest George (4.2%), a deep brown bitter; Portland Black a 4.5% Stout and Henrietta (3.6%), a golden ale with foreign hop hints — all delicious quaffing beers using Maris Otter malt and mainly English Hops (such as Wye Challenger) with hophead varieties in some of the occasional brands such as Cavendish — an estate family name — which is a golden bitter (5%) that was especially on for our visit (it uses Cascade and Motueka hops). These four beers gave a very refreshing glow to the visit.

With two brews a week, the draught beers go to about 70 plus local outlets together, with a few bottle conditioned brands in the farm shop.

Watch this name — as it links with delicious artisanal food and the outreaches of a new microbrewery course at University of Sheffield the brewing of traditional English beers gets into top gear. More info can be at [www.welbeckabbeybrewery.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.welbeckabbeybrewery.blogspot.co.uk)

Such visits are invaluable and should be better supported if Guild members wish to keep up to date, be awe

inspired and have a different slant on the beer renaissance story.

**Chris Marchbanks**

*Guild trips — time to call time?*

THE GUILD has always offered trips to its members, whether it's several hours in a brewery or an overnight event that might include a beer dinner. As you can see above, Moorhouse's have issued an invitation to members to see their new brewhouse, something which I did last month and I can recommend it. However, the other day (Thursday) was also the occasion of a visit to Welbeck Brewery near Worksop, an enterprise that Guild member Dave Wickett has had a hand in. I announced it to the membership and originally there were at least a dozen people going. I asked Dave what his limit would be and he told me that he'd once squeezed in 40 people. Through a variety of circumstances three people ended up going — and I suspect the rest of us missed a great time (and I'll put my hand up, I had to cry out as well). The reason why I am writing this is that I am asking the question — is it worthwhile for the Guild to offer trips anymore? I used to organise them, then the late John White and then Chris Marchbanks did a sterling job. Now, I am sort of organising them again but I do wonder if they are valid in this day and age of tweet-up etc etc.

All this is solely my own personal view and nothing to do with the committee but I would like members to send me their thoughts on what the future holds for what has been a vital part of the Guild in the past.

**Adrian Tierney-Jones**