

British Guild Of Beer Writers

Newsletter April 2012



IT DOESN'T seem that long ago that the Guild had a debate about the relevance of electronic media to our work. We took several years to embrace it within our awards. Now apace, online writing is becoming the prevailing medium for journalists and writers.

Every news outlet I write for uses my stories online before it sees the light of day, often weeks later, in paper form. A second edition of my *London's Riverside Pubs*, which was published last year, is being produced as an e-book. Jeff Evans' *Beer Lover's Britain* is available in a Kindle format as are Peter Brown's trinity of beery experiences: *Hops & Glory*, *Three Sheets to the Wind* and *A Man Walks into a Pub*. Last month our man in Prague Evan Rail published the excellent *Why Beer Matters* as an e-book. And the *Brewers' Guardian* is no longer produced in a paper format. Times change and this digitization of our work is something that will have to be taken into account when entries are being sought for this year's Guild awards. It was so easy when all that was asked for were four photocopies of printed articles. Distributing them to the judges was relatively easily; the era of different electronic formats presents us with some challenges.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS At the recent highly successful beer ingredients seminar in Burton upon Trent Steve Wellington, the former brewer at the William Worthington Brewery and saviour of Worthington's legendary White Shield, was presented with our rarely given but richly

deserved Lifetime Achievement Award. He was given the award in recognition of his work, which has motivated brewers around the world and inspired hundreds of articles and broadcasts.

FUTURE SEMINARS Ingredients of beer: such was the success of the brewing ingredients seminar that it has prompted several members to ask could it be repeated in London? The answer is: yes we hope it can. We are looking for a date and venue where it could be held in London early next year. It won't be a direct repeat of the Burton event, but will hopefully include new information and possible something on yeast.

Beer and health The feedback form from the Burton event included several requests for a seminar on the health benefits of beer. Our good friends at the Beer Academy/BDI/BBPA have agreed to take this on as a project and we are looking for a date and venue for an event later this year — probably in the autumn.

Sour beers and Lambics We are considering holding a seminar with a beery theme for later this year, which would peer into the sometime murky glasses of sour and Lambic beers. More details to follow.

Learning to write about beer and getting work published Several new members have asked if a seminar could be organised which looks at how people could improve their writing and journalistic skills as well as gain an understanding of the commissioning process. We are looking at the feasibility of hosting such an event, but will need feedback from members on when would be the best time to put on such an event – daytime, evening or weekend? We might also have to consider a charge for the event as trainers do not come cheap.

Payment for work Tom Sandham started a good debate on payment for work in the last newsletter. Any member wanting guidance on rates will find some very useful information and food for thought on rates on the NUJ website —

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www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide/index.php?language=en&country=UK§ion=Welcome is well worth a visit I also plan to put this link up on the Guild's website.

Tim Hampson

The best beer laager in the world?

TIM WEBB gets in touch to say that he is going to the Copenhagen Beer Festival by car on Tuesday May 8 and using the night ferry from Harwich with a view to getting to Copenhagen by lunchtime Thursday. It's a Volvo V70 and so has a large capacity. He would be happy to take stocks of members' books if anyone is interested to send any. The logistics of getting them to him can be discussed. According to Tim, 'the Copenhagen festival is one of the best in Europe for range and quality of beer and I can thoroughly recommend it. Also, I sold more books per hour in Copenhagen last year than I did at GBBF, so it makes commercial sense too. If anyone is interested can they email me direct.' For more info on the festival, apply the Google translation tool to www.beerfestival.dk.

Kindle fire

INSPIRED BY Evan Rail's success in publishing his essay *Why Beer Matters* on Kindle, I've just finished a major overhaul of my e-book *Beer Lover's Britain*. The book is a compact overview (30,000 words) of the British beer and pubs world, overtly aimed at overseas visitors trying to navigate their way to finding a great beer in a great pub, highlighting the way we do things here, what to look out for and the snares and traps to avoid. But I also hope it provides a snapshot of where we are in the industry, and where we've come from in the last 20 years — a survey of how dramatically the pub landscape has changed and how the brewing industry has been invigorated and shaken into life. I first published the book on my website, www.insidebeer.com, three years ago, so it's needed a good, thorough update. It's remarkable how much has changed in just that short period of time. I'm hoping that Kindle provides a good route to market, considering it's relatively easy to publish there and the royalty structure is very good (By the way, you don't need a Kindle device to read Kindle books: just download from Amazon the free reader for iPad, or Mac or PC computers). I'm also hoping that Britain will be inundated with visitors this summer for The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics, and that all of them have raging thirst for British beer. If you know of anyone heading this way, please point them in the direction of *Beer Lover's Britain*. More information can be found on www.insidebeer.com, or by searching for the book on Amazon. **Jeff Evans**

Yorkie bar

FORMER GUILD Chairman Barrie Pepper and Guild member Sam Parker are running a beer festival in conjunction with the Lord Mayor of Leeds on Friday April 27/Saturday 28 at St Aidan's Church in Leeds. They have sourced 30 'interesting and unusual' ales, mainly from the Yorkshire region, including festival specials from Ridgeside (served from the wood) and Great Heck (brewed by head brewer Denzil Vallance

and Sam Parker). An international bottled beer bar plus two offerings from Brooklyn Brewery dispensed through hand pump and imported especially for the festival will complement the cask offerings. The event is already well supported by the Guild with sponsorship from Podge's Belgium Beer Tours and Tetley's thanks to Guild member Joanna Dring, while Simon Jenkins will be chairing the Best Bottled Beer of the Festival — however more support is needed though to help showcase good beers whilst earning much needed money for the festival charities. Do you want to take up one of the fantastic advertising offers? Could you sponsor a barrel at only £80? Could you publicise the event through your website, column etc? Do you fancy attending or even better bringing a party along? Up-to-date information can be found on www.northleedscharitybeerfestival.co.uk, www.facebook.com/NorthLeedsCharityBeerFestival or Twitter: @nleedsbeerfest. Even better contact Barrie and Sam directly at samuelparker@googlemail.com.

BHS landmark

The Brewery History Society marks its 40th anniversary this year. As part of the Society's celebrations Professor Peter Mathias, author of the pioneering *The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830* will be made its first Honorary Life Member. This will take place during the Society's AGM which is being held at Fuller's Brewery, Chiswick, on Friday 20 April. The Society is also delighted to announce the publication of a special issue of the journal *Brewery History* in early April, which will be a reproduction in full of Mathias' *The Anchor Brewery: Park Street, Southwark*. Written in 1953 this work has never been published and only three copies are known to exist. As Ken Thomas, curator of the Courage archives, writes in his introduction, 'although *The Anchor Brewery* is important as it opens a window on the early stages of the study of business history, it is also much more than that. It tells the story of the rise of one of England's largest breweries against the backdrop of the industrial revolution'. For more information on the Brewery History Society please visit: <http://breweryhistory.com>.

London hop shoot festival

AN UNUSUAL ingredient will appear on London menus over the weekend of April 27-29. Members of the London Brewers' Alliance will be supplying hop shoots to the pubs, bars and restaurants they supply

CALENDAR 2012

- 19-21 April SIBA Southwest Maltings Beer Festival, Newton Abbot
- 21 June, BGBW AGM, the Clachan, London
- 7-11 August, GBBF, Olympia, London (there's a sports day of sorts on at the same time as well)
- 6 December BGBW annual dinner and awards, London, venue TBC

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

and challenging chefs across the capital to incorporate these tasty little spears into a variety of imaginatively created dishes.

Hop shoots are part of a number of plants that have picked up the pseudonym 'Poor Man's Asparagus'. This group includes samphire, salsify, Good King Henry and Alexanders; plants that were once eaten much more widely than they are today. The name suggests how they were traditionally prepared; fried in butter and, with a little salt, served straight from the pan.

On April 27 Members of the London Brewers' Alliance will visit the Kentish hop farm of Chris Liliwhite to gather hop shoots and then will race back to London to distribute freshly cut shoots to anxiously waiting chefs, eager to give even the most widely travelled foodie a taste sensation they are unlikely to have tried before.

The idea behind the Hop Shoot Festival is to remind Londoners of the historic connection between the city and the land. For centuries London was the brewing capital of the world. East Anglia produced and still produces the world's best malting barley and Kent still produces some of the world's finest hops. London's brewers relied on both these regions for the ingredients required in huge quantities to slake the thirsts of generations of drinkers.

The Hop Shoot Festival is a celebration of that renaissance, a recognition that we are living through an exciting period in the long history of brewing in London and a reminder of the continuous nature of the relationship between town and country. Participating places include the Bull, Highgate; the Euston Flyer, Euston; The Victoria, Bayswater; Duke's Brew & Que, Hackney; Horseshoe, Hampstead; the Draft House, Battersea, Clapham and London Bridge; Old Red Cow, Smithfield; the Clifton, St Johns Wood; Crown & Anchor, Chiswick; White Swan, Twickenham; the Botanist, Kew; Ben's Canteen, St John's Hill.

For more information contact Guild member Peter Haydon at brewery@florencehernehill.com.

Chocolate lab

BEER-LOVING women from across the brewing recently hosted their annual Beer and Chocolate tasting at the Draft House, Tower Bridge. With Easter firmly in their sights, the women sampled five beers matched perfectly with five different chocolates. A variety of pale ales, porters, barley wines and golden ales from the likes of Sambrooks, Fuller's, Carlsberg, Brewsters and Fordham were available to sample at the third annual Beer and Chocolate tasting by beer and women group Dea Latis, named after the Celtic Goddess of Beer.

Annabel Smith from the group said: 'Beer is one of the most versatile types of drink there is and with this showcase, we're proving that beer and chocolate really is a match made in heaven! Our group's aim is to share all that is great about beer with women — some of whom are perhaps put off by the media's portrayal of beer. Typical points that can put women off are the images of the beer belly or pint glasses. With beer having fewer calories than wine and with

the growing popularity of third of a pint glasses, two of those myths can be dispelled at once! With events such as these, we hope to make beer more accessible to women and provide the opportunity to taste the beer in an informal atmosphere.'

THE MATCHES WERE: Brewster's Chocolate Cyn (4.8%) with *Divine Dark Chocolate with Orange & Ginger*. Selected by Jane Peyton, School of Booze This was a 4.8% porter containing Fairtrade cocoa from Divine chocolatiers and cinnamon and was deceptively light for a dark beer, with a rich chocolate and coffee character linking arms with a spicy bitterness provided by the cinnamon. This is a collaboration beer brewed with Sara Barton at Brewster's with a trio of Dea Latis members, Jane Peyton, Marverine Cole, and Shea Luke.

Jacobsen Barley Wine (9.5%) with *Thornton's Alpini Continental Chocolates*. Selected by Joanna Dring, communications manager, Carlsberg UK The 2011 vintage Jacobsen Barley Wine is brewed at the Carlsberg microbrewery in Copenhagen. At over 9%, this is a beer that really packs a flavour punch! Its aroma is complex, with notes of liquorice, caramel and nuts along with smoky undertones. Paired with hazelnut and almond chocolate from Thornton's, the beer's full-bodied and semi-sweet taste perfectly matches the nutty chocolate.

Fuller's Golden Pride (8.5%) with *Merry Berry Mixed Spice & Fruit Dark Chocolate*. Selected by Jane Peyton, School of Booze

A full-bodied barley wine with a huge amount of fruit character — orange marmalade, mango, figs, raisins and treacle malt, plus a firm hop base to balance the sweetness. This beer should replace any temptation to drink Cognac after a meal!

Sambrooks Pale Ale (4.2%) with *Paul A Young's XO Marmite chocolate*. Selected by Jo Miller, marketing director, Sambrooks Brewery Sambrooks Pale Ale is brewed using Maris Otter floor malted barley, and a blend of English and New Zealand hops including Admiral, First Gold, Celeia and Hallertau. The result is a golden ale with an aroma of spicy meadow herbs and a sharp, marmalade and lingering dry taste. In keeping with the south London brewer's tradition of working with local producers, they have matched this with the creative genius of Soho chocolatier Paul A Young's XO Marmite chocolate. The Madagascan chocolate in the recipe is a fine and equal partner to the fruity and tangy nature of the beer, though be warned it is not a match for the faint hearted or the unadventurous.

Fordham Doppelbock (8%) with *Green & Black's Dark Chocolate with Cherry*. Selected by Julie Finney-Hogg, marketing director, Heathwick. Doppelbock is a smooth, full-bodied dark lager brewed with Munich, Pilsner and Carafa malts, combined with Perle and Tettang hops, and in strict adherence to the *Reinheitsgebot*. Its complexity makes it an ideal match for all types of chocolate as well as Black Forest cake and dried fruit rum tart.

Scottish power

LIKE MANY other things, brewing is cyclical — and despite the crushing financial pressures of the moment, Scotland is enjoying something of a resurgence when it comes to new breweries. Back in the malt-perfumed glory days of the early 1900s, Edinburgh had well over 30 producing in the city, the smoke from their fires mingling with that from other industries to blanket the Lothians.

The air quality of 'Auld Reekie' may have improved over the intervening 100 years, but only as the breweries whittled away from that untenable number. At the moment, we have only one inside the city limits (Caledonian) — but Stewart Brewing is nearby, as are Belhaven. However, this month four new producers have either hit the bottle shops or announced their intentions — have the boom times arrived again?

Admittedly, due to costs none of the newcomers are situated within the city — but nevertheless these announcements are all very welcome. In pole position, the St Andrews Brewing Company — working from an industrial estate in Glenrothes. Owner Bob Phaff has a great chance to fill the gap in the thirsty town of students and golfers, and his beers are already in the local market. Dave Whyte is producing as DemonBrew from the antiquated kit at the Prestoungrange Gothenburg — a.k.a. 'the greatest social destination in Prestonpans'. Trouble with storage and red tape mean his beers are rare — but steadily increasing in profile. Also new are Alechemy Brewing Ltd in Livingston — their brew kit is currently being installed. Finally, we have the Eclipse Brewery — two young homebrewers who have taken the plunge and invested all in sourcing a bespoke brewkit to enter production. With only recipes behind them, they are at the back of the pack, but hoping to get beer out into the market before the end of the year. And which beer writer would begrudge them that dream?

The promising bottom line here is they are all filling different niches. St Andrews are releasing traditional bottled beer (golden ales, oatmeal stouts), whereas Eclipse have a German background and are keen to put out continental bottled styles. Alechemy are cask-oriented but have an idea for small-run higher abv bottles, and DemonBrew are cask-only because of their limitations with space and delivery.

The future for Scottish brewing seems bright, as that's only the current picture in the Lothians. New breweries are also opening at a rate of knots elsewhere. From Loch Lomond to Cromarty, people are putting their money down and taking the plunge. Of course, the real test is how many of them will still be around in five years time, but knowing how much the Scots love a good beer — I'd guess pretty much all of them.

Richard Taylor

Londinium calling (once again)

LONDON WAS once known as the capital of the world for beer with the exporting of its famous brews all around the globe. Today, although there are fewer breweries, London has recently seen a growth in the number of its small brewers, which is being embraced wholeheartedly by Londoners. But of course, London's reputation for fine pubs has always been recognised,

with some of the best in the UK to be found there, and many have been places where history has been made. Research has shown that over 60% of visitors to Britain say that they will visit a pub when they come to visit. CAMRA is coordinating a campaign to raise the profile of beer and pubs during the summer, starting in the first week in July, featuring the Ealing Beer Festival and culminating with the Great British Beer Festival in August at Olympia. From the beginning of April there will be a website up and running (www.londoncityofbeer.org.uk) listing all the activities involving beer across London, whether it is a brewery open day, an event in a pub or a guided tour around some of London's history making pubs. So, if the Guild members have an event that is taking place during July and August, please drop a line to londoncityofbeer@gmail.com for a free listing. The event is being launched to the media on 18 April in the evening with a tasting that matches London beer with some Great British food and is introduced by Roger Protz. The venue is one of Fuller, Smith and Turner's City pubs, the Red Herring in EC2. Places are limited but if any member thinks they can place the story, please get in contact. All help is welcome in putting beer firmly on the map!

Beer Academy news

THE TAKE-UP of Beer Academy courses has risen by over a third during the first three months of 2012 compared with bookings over the same period last year. According to Beer Academy Director, Simon Jackson: 'There is a resurgence of public interest in beer; consumers are increasingly demanding to know more about the beers that they are drinking; how they are brewed; what they taste like; how to match them with food. Our most popular products continue to be our 90-minute tastings and the How to Judge Beer course but there has also been an uplift of bookings for our two day Advanced Course from aspiring Beer Academy Sommeliers. The companies that are succeeding in the beer business have the ability to inspire people to try their brands and visit their pubs. More and more companies are discovering that the Beer Academy helps them do just that.'

A full calendar of future courses and events can be found on the Beer Academy website (www.beeracademy.co.uk), though upcoming ones can be seen below.

Beer Academy courses

April 10, 90 Minute Tasting, Around the globe in 90 minutes, White Horse, London

April 10, How to Judge Beer, Marston's, Burton

April 17, 90 Minute Tasting, Cheese & Beer celebrating National Stilton Week, White Horse, London

April 27, How to Judge Beer, George, Bristol

April 28, One day Foundation Course, George, Bristol

May 8, 90 Minute Tasting, Cheese & Beer, White Horse, London

And finally...

Congratulations are due to member Shea Luke who recently announced that she is expecting her first child on September 8.