

# British Guild Of Beer Writers

## Newsletter July 2014



### **IT WAS good to see so many members at our AGM and I'd like to thank everyone for their positive contributions.**

The new committee is: Chairman, Tim Hampson; Secretary Adrian Tierney-Jones; Treasurer, Paul Nunny; Committee members are Sophie Atherton, Ros Shiel, Robert Humphreys, Frances Brace, Paul Hegarty and Dave Bailey, while Adam Driver has been seconded onto the committee.

The key decision made by the AGM was to change our membership structure and the categories are now: full membership, associate membership, corporate membership and honorary membership.

It was decided that a membership committee would be established to define the new categories and to make recommendations to the Guild's committee on the eligibility of new members and the categories they would be recommended for. Potential members would have the right of appeal to the committee should they disagree with a recommendation made by the membership committee. The membership committee will be chaired by Adrian Tierney-Jones with John Porter, Georgina Wald and Bryan Betts as members.

**Full membership £40: subscription period: one year** open to all journalists, writers, broadcasters, film makers, PR workers, artists, photographers, bloggers and audio/visual content producers communicating about beer. They would need to produce a body of work, which would be adjudged by a membership committee. Would be granted full rights, including voting ones. All current members would automatically become full members.

**Associate membership £40: subscription period: one year** non-voting member, but would be invited to Guild events such as seminars,

celebrations and the AGM (though without voting rights); would also get members' discounts on the dinner — can enter the awards. It would be expected that associate members aim to become full members. If they haven't achieved that status after three years then membership committee could decide to review their membership. Not in the directory.

**Corporate membership** for companies.

**Honorary membership** free membership to any member who has been in the Guild for 15 years and is over 65, if they so choose.

### **Annual contest for beer writing now open**

We have launched our annual competition for beer writing, with the addition this year of a new award for the Best Young Beer Writer, designed to foster new writing about our national drink. The awards now include eight categories with a total prize fund of £9500 for winners and runners-up. All entries will be judged on how well they further the Guild's mission 'to extend public knowledge and appreciation of beer and pubs'. The competition is open not just to writers but to radio and television broadcasters, photographers, illustrators, designers — in fact, to anyone who communicates about beer or pubs. Books, national or regional press articles, websites, films, blogs, in-house or customer magazines and podcasts can all be submitted, either by the creator or on their behalf by a publisher, associate or admirer. The category winners and runners-up will be unveiled at an Awards presentation dinner on December 4 at the Jumeriah Carlton. The Guild also bestows the 'Brewer of the Year' title on one brewer at the same event.

### **Entries and nominations are invited for eight categories**

• *Molson Coors Award for Best Beer Writer* — National Media. Prize of £1000 for winner and £500 for runner-up

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- **Adnams Award for Best Beer Writer** — Regional Media. Prize £1000 and £500
  - **Fuller's ESB Award for Best Beer Writer** — Trade Media. Prize £1000 and £500
  - **Brains SA Gold Award for Best Beer Communicator** — Online. Prize £1000 and £500
  - **Greene King IPA Award for Best Beer and Travel Writer**. Prize £1000 and £500
  - **Shepherd Neame 1698 Award for Best Beer and Food Writer**. Prize £1000 and £500
  - **Thwaites Award for Best Beer Writer** – Corporate Communications. Prize trophy to the winner
  - **British Guild of Beer Writers Award for Best Young Beer Writer** – one prize of £500 **Tim Hampson**

## News

• **Cask Marque** is challenging the industry to open up its breweries for free tours and tastings over the weekend of September 27-28 as part of Cask Ale Week celebrations. 'Opening breweries to the public plays on people's growing fascination with beer,' said Cask Marque director Paul Nunny. 'There's a real excitement about the emergence of many hundreds of new breweries in the last three years — and people are keen to know more about them. This is the ideal opportunity to respond to their curiosity!

'We're suggesting brewers offer free guided tours, talks and tastings over the weekend. It can be a great community event where they're teaching people about brewing, beer, ingredients, flavour and aroma. They can engage consumers, encourage brewery and brand loyalty, gain press coverage and provoke positive social media activity.'

*The Daily Telegraph* is supporting Cask Ale Week with a free pint offer in pubs — and it will also encourage readers to visit local breweries that are opening their doors. Details of open days and brewery events will be shown on the Cask Ale Week website — and the support of Cask Marque pubs and CAMRA will be enlisted to publicise the activities.

Mike Benner, Managing Director of the Society of Independent Brewers, said, 'we will be encouraging our 800 plus brewer members to throw open their doors during Cask Ale Week. Brewery tours are a powerful way to engage with consumers, showing them not just the brewing process and the fantastic beers on offer, but also the many benefits that a brewery brings to its local community by creating jobs, employing local suppliers and often sourcing the raw materials for its beers.'

Breweries should email [info@cask-marque.co.uk](mailto:info@cask-marque.co.uk) with the details of their planned activity over the weekend and this will be uploaded onto the Cask Ale Week website.

• **A crack (yes crack)** judging team from the Guild will once again be weighing up the entries in the Honey Beer category at the National Honey Show this year. Tim Hampson, Steve Williams and John Porter have judged the award for the past four years, when

the venerable event reintroduced a beer prize after a long hiatus, in recognition of the increasing number of brewers using honey as an ingredient. Beers from Freeminer, Fuller's, Sharp's and Lovibonds have now won the Best Honey Beer title, and there is also a prize for the best home-brewed honey beer. John says: 'It would be great to see more entries in the category — we know there are many more beers out there brewed with honey than the number entered each year. There are also hundreds of meads entered each year compared to a handful of beers, so the pride of craft brewing is at stake. We'd be grateful for any Guild member who knows a brewer with a beer that uses honey as an ingredient to encourage them to enter, or even to have a go at their own for the home brew category. The National Honey Show has been a fixture in the beekeeping calendar since 1923. The 2014 National Honey Show takes place from October 30-November 1, and entry forms can be downloaded from [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk). If you know a beer you think should be entered, please email John details at [john@shielporter.com](mailto:john@shielporter.com).

• **Flanders Pale Ale** All members will have received an invite to the launch of Flanders Pale Ale at the Chiltern Brewery in Aylesbury, Bucks, Tuesday July 29, 8.30am-10.30am. The limited edition beer has been brewed with Roger Protz who will open the event. Anyone thinking of going should remember to RSVP [sally@chilternbrewery.co.uk](mailto:sally@chilternbrewery.co.uk).

• **Beer Trails** is a new series of longer, writerly narratives and essays on beer and brewing, that is launching this summer with its first e-book, *The Brewery in the Bohemian Forest*, by British Guild of Beer Writers member Evan Rail. It is available on Amazon, BN.com, Apple iTunes and Google Play and it will be a new series of long-form writing about beer, with more titles planned from US beer writer Stan Hieronymus and fellow Guild members Joe Stange and Adrian Tierney-Jones.

• **London Beer City** will take place August 9-16, comprising dozens of events at the capital's pubs, bars and breweries. Most of London's best breweries, including Camden Town, Beavertown and Fourpure, will be hosting one-off events, with dinners, talks, special brewery openings, tours and more planned. Camden Town Brewery are planning several events including a beer dinner at Caravan in King's Cross, an American day at the brewery's base and something particularly special — planned for the Friday — which

## CALENDAR 2014

- Great British Beer Festival, London, August 12-16
- British Guild of Beer Writers dinner and awards,

London, December 4

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

is still under wraps. Fourpure, whose beer is served in Michel Roux Jr's restaurants, will be hosting an open evening at their brewery in Bermondsey on Wednesday 13, with the tap-room bar open and tours of the brewery on offer. Beers from a select group of other London brewers — including Windsor & Eton and Woolwich's Hop Stuff — will also be available. Another highlight is the return of the London Craft Beer Festival, which showcases the work of some of the world's best breweries, including Britain's Thornbridge and Magic Rock and, from across the Atlantic, Sierra Nevada and Founder's. It takes place at Oval Space in Bethnal Green over four days, from August 14. London Beer City organiser Will Hawkes, the current British Beer Writer of the Year and the author of *Craft Beer London*, says the event will be truly inclusive. For more information contact Will Hawkes (07786 160248, willhawkes1@gmail.com).

- **The UK's biggest Pub Beer Festival** returns to London this Autumn. The Craft Beer Co., the people behind the UK's biggest pub beer festival back in April at its site in Clapham, London, are set to repeat the event this September. The organisers say that they are on track to make the event 'even more spectacular than the last'. The 'Craft 100' festival will run from September 18-21 and will once again showcase a staggering 100 beers from the very best breweries across the UK, as well as a few international guests. More information can be found at: [www.craft100.co.uk](http://www.craft100.co.uk).

## Brewer of the Year

**Members can** now make nominations for the British Guild of Beer Writers Brewer of the Year. The award is made at our annual dinner and it was last awarded to famed brewer Derek Prentice. The criteria for the Beer and Brewing awards is about awarding it to a brewer or brewing organisation that has made the most contributions to brewing in the previous last 12 months. Please send nominations by September 5 to [atierneyjones@gmail.com](mailto:atierneyjones@gmail.com) and please include your reasons (up to 100 words) for making the nomination.

## Beer writing: past, present & future

**The Guild's** latest seminar is on Thursday, October 23 at Hook Norton Brewery; held in conjunction with the Brewery History Society it will review how beer writing has developed over the past 200 years; examine coverage of beer in the modern media and explore how beer communication might evolve in the digital age. The workshop is free of charge to members of the Guild and Brewery History Society and their guests. There is a fee of £25 for non-members. Please RSVP to Angie Armitage at Cask Marque [angie@cask-marque.co.uk](mailto:angie@cask-marque.co.uk). Transport will be provided to and from Banbury Station for those travelling by train so please let Angie know if you require transport from the station.

## Beer proves big hit at Imbibe Live

**Guild members** and some of the country's top brewers helped Imbibe Live raise the beer stakes at its annual show at Olympia on July 1-2. Working with Mark Dorber in his role as Beer Ambassador, The Beer Academy launched the Beer Fringe, sent visitors out on Beer Safaris, and ran a pair of sell-out beer training courses, the latter led by its new director of training, Master Brewer Alex Barlow, and Brewer of the Year, Derek Prentice.

Headline acts at the Taste Zone this year included a return appearance from Ben McFarland with his annual dose of crystal ball gazing — cocktails, cans and pairing beers with shots are some of the trends to watch he says. 'Hops have driven the world of craft beer,' said Beer Writer of the Year, Will Hawkes, in his global perspective on the rise and rise of craft beer. Mitch Adams followed up his recent cider and food pairing spectacular at the Cider Summit with a spice-infused master class in association with Thatchers Cider. Matches for dishes created by Sweet Cumin's Bini Ludlow for Thatchers' current food matching initiative were shared, as well as the principles behind the decisions.

Elsewhere, Draft House Founder Charlie McVeigh discussed ways to pep up a moribund beer list, and breweries including Adnams, Marstons and Meantime shared their latest releases.

From novice to pro, visitors with all levels of beer knowledge joined up with Beer Sommeliers Jane Peyton, Sophie Atherton and Meantime's Rod Jones for the afternoon Beer Safaris. Acting somewhat like a Beer Hub, the Beer Academy stand was consistently busy, with Simon Jackson, Dan Cannas and Shane McNamara serving up bottled beers from keynote breweries old and new.

Adnams' Fergus Fitzgerald kicked off the Beer Fringe on the first day, with subsequent appearances from Purity's Florent Vialan and Derek Prentice (what a star!), plus a lager-infused double act from Windsor & Eton's Paddy Johnson and Adrian Tierney-Jones. While British Hops' Ali Capper made a guest appearance on the second day, Mark Dorber and Rupert Ponsonby proved a typically charismatic closing duo, with their session on the art of serving.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank all those who lent their support and who took the time to pay the show a visit. We know the beauty — and value — in beer. I see this as a strong beginning with really introducing its power to the restaurant and bar sector as well as pubs. I'm already looking forward to next year. Hope to see you there! **Susanna Forbes**

## Jolly good show beer, jolly good show!

**The profile** of beer has been hugely increased at two of 2014's major drinks industry trade shows, the London Wine Fair and Imbibe Live. At the former I

helped introduce — and also largely curated — the new Brewhouse beer section which saw more than 20 breweries, beer wholesalers and distributors exhibiting some of their best brews to an audience eager to soak up not just the liquid but as much beer-knowledge as they could.

At Imbibe Live I was part of the Beer Academy presence — under the leadership of Guild member and official Imbibe Live Beer Ambassador Mark Dorber — which offered talks, tastings and beer safaris (tours of the show to help punters find those exhibiting beer) to firmly put beer on the map as a must-have beverage for any discerning establishment serving food and drink.

Brewers having stands at general, rather than beer-specific, drinks' trade shows isn't necessarily a completely new thing — but the way their presence is perceived is changing for the better. We need more of this 'trade not aid' style promotion to make sure the beer revolution doesn't hit the buffers.

Look at it this way; consider where you most like to have a beer. Then compare it with all the places you actually have a beer, along with the places where you want to but don't — and that's the point of my question. It's about the opportunity to drink great beer wherever you are.

A cool beer at home, at the end of a long day, is such a relaxing pleasure. Just open the fridge and take your pick. Letting it come up to drinking temperature while you find a good glass (yes. I have a LOT of glasses). A well-kept pint down the pub be it with Beer Husband in our local, or far away in a delightful home-from-home public house serving up cask ale from nearby to be supped from an appropriate pint vessel — just bliss. But what of the other travels — the kind where you find yourself miles from any pub you'd be prepared to cross the threshold of? All the following have something in common: staying in hotel chains, eating in the hotel restaurant, or, if I'm not too tired, a decent chain option; (rarely) achieving the away-on-business high of discovering an independent that serves marvellous — and healthy — food.

What links them 99% of the time is the lack of good beer. Choice masquerading under the banner of around five beers — which are usually the same five mass produced lagers with barely a matchstick of difference between the 'flavour' of each; flavourless old-style-keg bitter, or — if 'lucky' those best-selling cask beers which hops forgot. The beer revolution (you can decide whether to call it craft or not) has not been televised, nor has it reached the food and drink mainstream or the land of identikit eateries — despite its progress in a few notable places with savvy beer-loving business people.

For the new beers to break through they need to reach and convince new audiences — both in terms of customers and consumers. Which is where the trade show comes in. Attended by restaurateurs,

independent wine merchants, buyers for wine chains, hoteliers... the list goes on. It's the audience beyond the pub (but make no mistake, the Great British pub at its best is sacred and to truly know beer it is THE place to drink it, but not the only place), but the audience beer needs to reach. The audience that needs to hear the message that, beer is so much more than it once was; that beer's heritage and history, the quality and provenance of its ingredients, the culture and language of those who make and drink it — have all come together to form this current movement of amazing beer that is a million times more exciting, sellable — and yes delicious — than a pint of brown liquid being flogged to us by man in cloth cap with a Jack Russell at his feet ever was. Within the industry and the wider community — the beer bubble if you will — the battle might seem to have been won. So much great beer in so many places! To grow — and even to sustain — that we need brewers to sell to new customers and find ways of being at these drinks trade shows so eager to embrace our new age of beer. Sophie Atherton

### **And finally, most importantly**

**Don't forget** the Guild's annual pre-GBBF event on Monday August 11, which this will be held at the Oyster Shed which is on the northern side of the Thames, not too far from London Bridge. Every member will have had an invitation to come along and if not please let the Guild's Secretary know.

### ***Beer Academy news***

***July 15-16, Two day Advanced Course, The Draft House, London.***

***August 16 Aug Beer and Food Matching The Draft House, London***

***September 16-17 Two Day Advanced Course, The Draft House, London***

***For details on venue, time and cost plus on other events visit [www.beeracademy.co.uk](http://www.beeracademy.co.uk)***

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**JULY 30 2014**