

# British Guild Of Beer Writers

## Newsletter August 2014



**OUR ANNUAL contest for beer writing is now open, with the addition 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 £9,500 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 also to radio and television broadcasters, photographers, illustrators, designers — in fact, it is open 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 judging of this year's entries is a panel including Will Dean, editor of the *Independent Magazine*, and Natalie Whittle, associate editor, *FT Magazine*. Chair of judges is Will Hawkes, current Beer Writer of the Year. The category winners and runners-up will be unveiled at our Awards dinner on December 4. Full details of all eight categories in the Awards, and how to enter, can be found at [www2.beerguild.co.uk/?page\\_id=2162](http://www2.beerguild.co.uk/?page_id=2162) — but hurry, closing date is approaching.

**Guild dinner** Our annual awards dinner will take place on December 4 at the Jumeriah Carlton off Sloane Street in London. Guild members Mitch Adams and Sophie Atherton are working with the chef to develop the menu for the evening. Tickets for the dinner will be going on sale shortly and the prices are being held as the same as last year; the dinner's logistics are managed by Creative Travel and Event Management (CTEM), who have been at the helm for several years now. Anyone wanting a hotel for that night should contact Fiona Whitehead at CTEM who should be able to arrange something — [fiona@ctem.co.uk](mailto:fiona@ctem.co.uk).

**Beer and Brewing Award, or, as it has come to be called, the Brewer of the Year** Have you made a nomination yet? We are looking for the individual or company that you think has made the greatest contribution to beer in the last 12 months. Send nominations, preferably by September 9, with a short explanation as to why they should be considered to the Secretary [atierneyjones@gmail.com](mailto:atierneyjones@gmail.com).

This award is the gift of the committee based on your nominations. Could the Secretary have 100 words (and please stick to 100 words of tightly argued text) on your nominated choice. Also could you disclose if you have brewed with your choice or work in other ways with them ie regular tastings, consultancy.

**Tim Hampson**

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## News

• **Hop Hideout shindigs** Guild member Jules Gray runs the Sheffield speciality beer shop Hop Hideout and if you're in the area on the coming dates you might want to hop in.

*Fri August 15:* Meet the Brewer with Bad Seed Brewery; *Fri Sept 5:* 100 Best Breweries bookazine evening hosted by Chris Hall and Craig Heap (beer and cheese sampling); *Sept-October:* Hop Hideout hosts Tag! beer label art exhibition. Featuring works from Alec Doherty (Partizan), Jim C (Kelham Island), Benjamin Cooney, Simon Peplow and Richard Norgate (Magic Rock). Hop Hideout, 444 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield. S7 1FR; [www.hophideout.co.uk](http://www.hophideout.co.uk).

• **Dea Diary** Beer and women forum Dea Latis is planning a couple of events for members and other beer-loving women over the next few months. Please make a note of these dates for your diaries and we'll send further details out shortly.

**Thurs September 25**, lunchtime: beer and cheese tasting, central London. (Note this is the first day of Cask Ale Week).

**Fri December 5**, 10-12pm: Beer and breakfast tasting, central London. A favourite Dea Latis event returns, on the morning after the Guild of Beer Writers' annual dinner. We hope to see you at one of our events. If you'd like any further information, or have suggestions for a Dea Latis event, please contact us at [dealatisuk@gmail.com](mailto:dealatisuk@gmail.com).

• **Milan Beer Week** Will Hawkes is not the only Guild member busy with a beer week, our man in Milano Maurizio Maestrelli has organised the debut Milan Beer Week, which runs for September 22-28. 'I had the inspiration a few years ago when I visited Philadelphia for the Philly Beer Week,' he says, 'in the last few years Italy has reached the amazing number of more than 500 micros and brewpubs and around 200 beer firms. We have plenty of craft beer festivals around the country, but the Milano Beer Week is different. We are going to celebrate good beers from around the world in the local pubs. We want to recognize the fundamental effort that these pub owners are doing to spread the beer culture and we want to promote beer culture outside the "circle" of beer geeks too.' During the week, the 18 spots will see tap takeover nights, Meet the Brewer events, guided tastings by the best

known Italian beer experts, food and beer dinners and book readings. 'The Milano Beer Week will be a simultaneous beer party held in different spots in the city,' says Maestrelli. 'Our goal is to transform this "week long party" in an all year round way of life...'

For more details contact Maurizio at [mmaestrelli@yahoo.it](mailto:mmaestrelli@yahoo.it).

• **OG Original Gravity%** is a new free, monthly independent publication about craft beer and real ale. According to founder (and Guild member) Daniel Neilson 'it has the slightly clumsy tagline (nicked and paraphrased from a Modest Mouse song): "Good news for people who love good beer".' It will be a magazine in a newspaper format and freely available in pubs and bottle shops in London, Manchester, Leeds and Bristol to start with. There will also be regular events, a big almanac magazine next summer, as well as a free tablet version and a website. It will be launched at the end of September. Contact Guild member Daniel Neilson ([originalgravitymag@gmail.com](mailto:originalgravitymag@gmail.com)) or [@OGBeerMag](http://@OGBeerMag) for any more information.

• **Tasting tasting** The Beer Academy are proud to sponsor the Great British Beer Festival Tutored Tastings being held at Olympia, London from the August 12. Click [here](#) for a programme of tastings. Come and visit our stand on Trade Day — we are located by the side of St Austell's Bar, between stands B12 and S42.

## 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

### CALENDAR 2014

- Great British Beer Festival, London, August 12-16
- Oktoberfest, Munich, Sept 20-Oct 5
- Great American Beer Festival. Denver, Oct 2-4
- SIBA Beer Festival October 24-25, National Brewery Centre, Burton upon Trent
- British Guild of Beer Writers dinner and awards, London, December 4

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

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 writing present**

*John Cryne has been a very busy bookophile recently and here are his thoughts on a couple of recently published books.*

**Beer in The Netherlands** Back in the day, 2002 to be precise, CAMRA published a guide to pubs and breweries in Belgium and the Netherlands. At that time I was visiting the latter more than the former so that book, edited by Tim Webb, was something of a godsend. But then that was it. Everything that followed from CAMRA was Belgium-only and the poor old Netherlands sat on the shelf, sad and neglected.

Well, good old boy that he is, Tim Webb, working with Joanna Copestick and The Homewood Press, has commissioned Tim Skelton to lead us through the beery tracks from Amsterdam to Zwolle. As the author of *Around Amsterdam in 80 Beers* and a resident of the Netherlands since 1989, Tim is well placed to help us on our journey.

As with many publications having Webb's influence, a strong shaft of humour flows through the book, especially the bits before the beer. Frankly, the section on eating left me somewhat disinclined to try any Dutch food, or least made it clear what to avoid! But the beer, that's a different story and there is a complete guide to some 180+ breweries and their beers (with a star rating) together with a selection of hundreds of cafes, brewery taps, off-licenses and beer festivals. Beer is back in The Netherlands and this book tells you how and why.

An invaluable guide to the beer tourist visiting the Netherlands and as worthwhile a companion as CAMRA's Good Beer Guide to Belgium. £13.99; [www.booksaboutbeer.com](http://www.booksaboutbeer.com).

**Brew Britannia** I find if you pick up a book and in a few pages are easily drawn in, then the chances are you have an eminently readable book in your hands. This was my experience with *Brew Britannia* by Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey.

The book, subtitled *The Strange Rebirth of British Beer*, seeks to take the reader along the road starting with the spreading beer deserts of the 1950s and ending with the phenomenon of pubs offering huge selections of beers of numerous varieties.

It is very much the story of a consumer revolt and, for me, one of the most interesting sections is the one that deals with the instrumental role of the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood. Boak and Bailey set out how SPBW came into existence, its key players and, albeit for a short time, the important role it played in fermenting the drinkers' revolt.

From there on, for me, the story becomes more familiar, the growth of CAMRA is covered in some detail. Indeed, the organisation and its achievements and yes failures crop up throughout the book as it is impossible to separate what CAMRA did from the wider beer scene.

But this is not a book about CAMRA, it addresses persons, events and developments that the authors consider have played a key role in beer's rebirth. Whether it is David Bruce and the Firkin pubs, the birth of micro-brewing, the development of golden ales, the use of American hops and indeed other perhaps wilder ingredients, such as food's entry into the mix, SIBA, Thornbridge, Dave Wickett, BrewDog and the cult of craft beer and craft beer bars, it is all in the mix. Personally, it was fascinating to recount the part played by Patrick Fitzpatrick of the short-lived Godson's Brewery and the Monty Python involvement in Penrhos.

Yes, it is all there. Whether you agree with the road they follow or the conclusion they reach, that is up to you. That's the point of books, to stimulate your little grey cells. It's their view of how beer came back from the brink and it's very much readable for that. Aurum Press, £12.99, [www.aurumpress.co.uk](http://www.aurumpress.co.uk).

### **Beer Academy news**

*August 16 Aug Beer & Food Matching, Draft House, London*  
*September 16-17 Two-day Advanced Course, Draft House, London*

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