

British Guild Of Beer Writers

Newsletter August 2015



PRE-GBBF RECEPTION The Guild's pre-Great British Beer Festival event takes place on 10 August at the Loose Cannon, Upper Thames Street, London EC4R 3UE. But if you haven't let Angie Armitage know that you are coming — then you probably won't get into it! Email angie@cask-marque.co.uk to confirm your place.

New chief executive at IBD Jerry Avis has been appointed to be Chief Executive Officer of the Institute of Brewing (IBDF) and Distilling. He replaces Guild member Simon Jackson who after nine years in the top job at the IBD is retiring. Avis is currently working at Lancaster University and his career has taken him to the University of Nottingham, Allied and Bass.

Awards dinner — 3 December Plans for the Guild's annual awards dinners at the Park Lane Hotel on Piccadilly are now well underway. So put 3 December into your diary now. Tickets will soon go on sale.

Professional development Twelve members attended the Guild-subsidised Beer Academy course on how to judge beer. Sadly, there was no

take-up of the pitch and deal course, which had to be cancelled, even though several members expressed an interest in attending it. Ros Shiel is proposing that we run the how to judge beer course again, and undaunted, we are going to give the pitch and deal course another go.

Guild seminar A seminar on historic beer styles, together with the Brewery History Society, is planned for later this year. The location has yet to be fixed, but it is likely to be in London and it could well be held on a Saturday. Full details will follow later.

Guild status We have taken tax advice on the Guild's planned move from a club status to non-profit making limited company and have been advised by our auditors that transferring the reserves over from the existing unincorporated Guild to the new Guild will not lead to any tax issues. The advice says: 'the reserves have built up over time in the unincorporated guild as income derived from and expended on behalf of the members. The transfer of the balance to the new business will not give rise to any corporation tax liability. The transfer won't give rise to any VAT issues either. Neither the

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existing Guild or the new company is registered for VAT and this transfer will not cause any issues from a VAT point of view.' **Tim Hampson**

NEWS

• **All-new editions of *Around Amsterdam in 80 Beers*** (Cogan & Mate, £10.99), by Tim Skelton, winner of the Guild's 2014 Silver Award for Best Beer and Travel Writer, and *Around Brussels in 80 Beers* (Cogan & Mater, £10.99) by Joe Stange, co-author of *Good Beer Guide Belgium*, will be published in August. Until September they will only be available via booksaboutbeer.com or at the bookshop at the Great British Beer Festival. The *Around in 80* series is edited by Tim Webb and first appeared in 2006. Using a listing of 80 cafes, restaurants, beer shops, museums, cinemas, whatever, each serving a different top quality beer, the books introduce readers to the underbelly of some of Europe's best beer-drinking cities and how to get the very best out of their different beer cultures. History, context, pub snacks, tram stops — you name it, it's covered. To date the series has covered London, Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin and Bruges, with a new edition of *Around Berlin in 80 Beers* planned for 2016, along with a new European capital — to be announced. Members who are attending the Guild's pre-GBBF bash are welcome to ask for review copies via the contact form on booksaboutbeer.com, the only condition being that you send us a copy of, or link to your review. **Tim Webb**

• **Nigel Sadler** gets in touch to say that as from 1 September he will become the freelance Brewing Tutor & Assessor at Hackney Community College, London for the Level 2 Apprenticeship in Brewing, which is in ever increasing demand from employers in the area. He will be working alongside respected London brewer (and 2013's Brewer of the Year Derek Prentice).

• **Craft Beer Co.** enters the City Following on from the successful opening of their Covent Garden site, The Craft Beer Co. founder Martin Hayes has announced that the group will debut in the City, after securing a site in London's Mitre Lane. Craft Beer Co. has secured the leasehold of the former Trident Bar and Restaurant on Mitre Lane after agreeing terms with a private landlord. This latest deal, their seventh site, sees the company move into London's city district, an area that Martin believes is 'hugely under-provided for in terms of craft beer'. The Craft Beer Co will re-open the Mitre Lane site after a substantial refurbishment has taken place.

• **Cask Marque Announces 1000th Ale Ambassador** Cask Marque, the industry watchdog for quality beer, has announced they have trained the 1000th Ale Ambassador registered on their Caskfinder Ale Trail. This is Helen Casey, from Salford, attended the Ale Ambassador course at Marston's, Burton. The 'Ale Ambassadors' are consumers who are passionate about the quality of beer and actively seek out Cask Marque accredited pubs. Their prize included a day at the brewery, a brewery tour, beer styles knowledge, a tasting session, technical handling of beer, and how to identify faults and off flavours in beer.

Helen was very positive about her course: 'The Ale Ambassadors course was fantastic. The day was packed with learning fun beer facts, going on an informative brewery tour, and gaining

CALENDAR 2015

- British Guild of Beer Writers pre-GBBF event, London, venue TBC, August 10
- Great British Beer Festival, London August 11-15
- British Guild of Beer Writers awards and dinner, London, December 3

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

useful information on the brewing and beer industry. My favourite part of the day was highlighting the potential off flavours in beer. This interested me the most as it ties in with my day job. I am currently studying for a PhD in physical chemistry. The Cask Marque ale trail has become a great hobby for me and my other half, visiting new places with great beer. We love Cask Marque!’

Consumers are encouraged to download Caskfinder, a free app, and scan the QR code on the Certificates of Excellence in Cask Marque accredited pubs. This has created the World’s Biggest Ale Trail, and when a user has scanned 100 different certificates they are invited to attend an Ale Ambassador Beer Appreciation course held at breweries nationwide. Over 30,000 drinkers have registered on the Ale Trail so far, and the leading Ale Trailer has scanned nearly 3,000 certificates. Each week on average 3,482 scans are actioned by Ale Trailers, which is great business for Cask Marque pubs.

Paul Nunny, MD of Cask Marque said: ‘we have been astounded at the success of the Ale Trail. It was designed to drive footfall into Cask Marque accredited pubs with the added bonus of the users accumulating prizes for their loyalty towards good cask ale outlets. It is critical that accredited pubs display their Certificates in accessible areas to encourage more users to join the World’s Biggest Ale Trail.’

The app also helps consumers to:

** Find over 9,500 pubs serving great quality cask ale*

** See what beers were on sale when Cask Marque last visited*

** See where else you can drink these beers*

** Find Beer Festivals happening all over the UK*

** Read the industry’s leading beer blog by Pete Brown*

Phase two of the app is in development

to allow pump clip recognition. This will mean that consumers can take a photo of the pump clip of a beer and it will give them the description of the beer. This will also be useful for bar staff to learn more about the beers they have on sale. For more information, please contact Cask Marque on 01206 752212 or Paul Nunny on 07768 614065 or email on Paul@nunny.fsbusiness.co.uk.

• **Cask Report and Cask Ale Week**

There will be a Cask Seminar to launch the Cask Report at 2pm on Wednesday 23 September at Brewers’ Hall. Plans are afoot to arrange an early evening get together after the Seminar to launch Cask Ale Week, which runs from Thursday 24 September to Sunday 4 October.

• **Maris Otter 50th Anniversary Beer Festival 17–19 September, The Open, Norwich.**

Trade Session 1pm, Thursday 17 September; opening talks compered by Guild members Roger Protz and Pete Brown.

As Guild members will know, cereal varieties usually last just five or six years before being superseded, so for Maris Otter to reach 50 years old is a real agricultural achievement. Its longevity is a tribute to the many award-winning craft brewers who steadfastly create demand for malt made from this amazing barley variety. The Maris Otter 50th Anniversary Festival is, as far as the organisers know, the only birthday party to be held in honour of a grain.

On offer at the Festival will be 50 cask beers, each from a different county or country, each a brand new, single-malt brew created especially for the occasion. Take a look at the list of brewers at www.marisotter50.co.uk. Beers on offer will include a collaborative brew by The Norfolk Brewhouse and Guild member Melissa Cole. If you’d like to come to the trade session or would like more

information on the Festival, give Frances Brace a shout — contact details on the Guild's website or in the new Directory.

• **Malting Tour and Malt Seminar**, Norfolk Thu 18th September While you're in Norfolk for the Maris Otter 50th Anniversary Festival, why not join the Crisp Malting Group team in Great Ryburgh for a malt seminar and malting tour on Friday 18 September? See the high-tech modern malting process — and the traditional floor malting method in one of Britain's last remaining floor maltings. Learn more about raw materials, malting techniques and malt types from some of the industry's most respected experts. The event starts at 10:15am and runs until 2:15pm. Should you require transport from and back to Norwich, let us know. To reserve your space please contact Frances Brace.

• **Maris Otter 50th Anniversary Top Otter** Finally, look out for Robin Appel's Maris Otter farmers' competition for 'Top Otter'. It will be judged at his Warminster Maltings in mid-October. For more information about this, please contact Rupert Ponsonby (details on the Guild's website or in the Directory). For information on Maris Otter, Robin Appel and H Banham please also contact Rupert or Frances.

ONE MONTH TO ENTER

GUILD AWARDS

WITH AROUND one month to go until the closing date for the Guild's Annual Awards on Friday 4 September, now is the time to put together an entry that could win you a share of this year's £10,500 prize fund. The Awards aim to reward the best communication about beer and pubs in eight categories. This year's judges are: Sarah Bridge, leisure correspondent at the Mail on Sunday; Sheila Dillon, presenter of BBC's The Food Programme:

Toby Heasman, head brewer at Hall & Woodhouse; Nick Hewer, Countdown presenter and lately of The Apprentice, and Larry Nelson, publisher of Brewers' Guardian. Robert Humphreys MBE, a long-serving Guild committee member, chairs the panel. Entries are welcome from all — whether or not they are Guild members — as well as nominations from third parties. Work must have been published between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 to be eligible. The winner and runner up in each category and the overall Beer Writer of the Year 2015 will be announced at the Guild's annual Awards dinner, which is being held on Thursday 3 December at London's Park Lane Hotel. Full details of how to enter the Awards, including a list of the categories, criteria and downloadable entry and nomination forms, can be found on the Guild's website — www2.beerguild.co.uk/?page_id=2162

We are as ever grateful to our Awards sponsors: Molson Coors; Adnams; Fuller's 1845; Caledonian Brewery; Shepherd Neame and Badger Ales.

TRAINING FOR GUILD MEMBERS

THE GUILD'S first training course for members, a How to Judge Beer half-day session with the Beer Academy, ran last month for 12 members. Feedback was positive and we would like to run the course again. As members have asked us to look at running courses and events outside London, we are looking at Leeds as a venue for this, if there is sufficient demand — so please let us know if it is of interest.

We are also offering a pitch and deal course, designed to help our many freelancer members to pitch their services to editors and other potential clients and negotiate a better fee for their work. This one-day course is run by experienced trainers who deliver it regularly for the NUJ and we believe it

would be hugely beneficial for many Guild members. We would like to run it in the autumn, probably in London. If you are interested in attending either or both of the above courses, please email ros@shielporter.com.

For both courses, we'd like to know what timings would work best for our members — is it easier to attend if they are held during the week, or in the evening, or even on a Saturday? Please let us know, and give us any other relevant feedback, so that we can build on the success of our first course and develop a training and development programme that suits members' needs. **Ros Shiel**

ACCESS ALL EXPERTS

LONG-TERM Guild Member Richard Morrice is celebrating 35 years in the beer trade by setting up a new business. Independent Drinks, based in York, provides a full range of support services to all small to medium sized brewers and cider makers. The company will use techniques that Richard and his colleagues have developed to make planning and running small businesses more straightforward and effective. The programme goes under the title 'Access all Experts'.

In essence, it works like this:

- 1. By telephone, Richard will work through six key questions with a business owner. If the business owner decides to proceed, the next stage will be...*
- 2. A face-to-face working session to identify potential routes and actions and any requirements for extra information and input.*
- 3. If appropriate, Richard and his team will recruit the best experts and specialists to contribute to the project.*
- 4. As the work proceeds Richard will stay on hand to provide input and help maintain the momentum. The keys to success are detailed planning, open*

discussions and rigorous project management. This is a collaborative development process.

The brewer or cider maker gets a great planning process supported by top experts in a managed and networked environment. It's a cost effective way of moving forward and is appropriate to decisions at all stages of a business, from 'Should I bottle my beer in 330ml bottles as well as 500ml?' to 'Should I expand my brewery?' Production, sales and marketing, communications (inside and outside the business) and team motivation and rewards are just some of the areas that can be covered. Alongside this Richard is in the final stages of commissioning a packaging plant in the North of England and is looking to set up an Investment Fund in 2016. If you would like to hear more, and find out how you can become involved, get in touch. You can contact Richard about 'Access all Experts' or the packaging plant on 07836 697660 or 01904 428450 or richard@independentdrinks.com.

BEER ACADEMY COURSES

- 17 August, Foundation Course, IBD HQ, London
 - 18 August, Advanced Course, IBD HQ, London
 - 2 September, How to Judge Beer, Pure Bar & Kitchen, Birmingham
 - 3 September, Advanced Course, Pure Bar & Kitchen, Birmingham
 - 7 September, Foundation Course, Brewhouse & Kitchen, Bristol
- For more information on these courses and on the Beer Academy please go to www.beeracademy.co.uk.