



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Election of Directors: Personal Profiles

The following directors are retiring by rotation: Paul Nunny and Robert Humphreys. Katie Wiles and Jacopo Mazzeo, as co-opted directors, must also retire. Joanna Dring is stepping down from her role as Director. All Directors were thanked for their contribution to the Guild.

We therefore have **five vacancies** on the Board.

Paul, Robert, Katie and Jacopo will be standing for re-election. Matthew Curtis and Kate Oppenheim are also standing for election. **Please find the personal profile of each candidate below.**

The Election of Directors will take place via Advance Voting with results to be announced during the AGM. All Full members who have registered to attend the AGM will receive a survey link 2 days in advance of the AGM to place their votes. Any questions, please contact secretary@beerguild.co.uk.

Robert Humphreys:

I've served on the Guild Committee and Board for far too long and really should now be voted off. On the other hand it's no end of fun, to which it would be a shame to say farewell.

I've made many mistakes and learned from almost none of them. For example, it was I who introduced Maureen Heffernan to this industry by employing her in 1985, and look where that's led. I was PR manager of Charrington at that time, a name of which few have now heard. My next job was PR Director of Bass Brewers, and where are they now?

My triumphs include leading the battle to save isinglass finings for the World's brewers from the bureaucrats of Brussels, and saving 6000 historic pub photographs from a skip – <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35031879>

I opened the Saltaire Brewery and closed Bass Runcorn and the Springfield Brewery in Wolverhampton. I ran a hotel in civil war-ravaged Nigeria in the 60s, pubs in London, a banqueting complex in the City, and love lunching at Sweetings. I started the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group in 1993 and managed to cling onto it for over twenty years, making the Prince of Wales *Beer Drinker of the Year* on the way, for his creation of Pub is the Hub.

These days I'm a director of SIBA and a trustee of the National Brewery Heritage Trust. I was expelled from the same school attended by David Bruce.

Paul Nunny:

A Chartered Accountant by profession, I have held various roles in the drinks industry - Deputy MD at Adnams and previously Lay & Wheeler, a Top 10 wine merchant. Currently Director of Cask Marque and Stay in a Pub and Chair for a number of industry initiatives. I created Stay in a Pub in 2013 to promote pub accommodation as a third income stream for pubs, as 75% of accommodation is booked on-line, to give them access to a wider customer audience. This is particularly important to rural pubs.

I have been Treasurer of the Guild for approximately 20 years, some might say too long!

Jacopo Mazzeo:

I am an Italian-born wine and beer writer, currently News Editor at drinks trade magazine Imbibe UK. I judge a number of national and international wine and beer competitions; I have been a certified beer sommelier since 2010 and I am now in the final year of the WSET Diploma in Wine. In 2016 the Guild awarded me Best Young Beer Writer.

My professional background is somewhat eclectic: I worked as a sommelier up to head sommelier position and also got a PhD in Historical Musicology. Most importantly though, I have been writing about beer for the past 12 years.

I have been a member of the Guild since I moved to the UK as a student nearly 10 years ago - with no contacts whatsoever and little language skills - and I truly believe that the Guild has been key to the professional development and achievements that followed.

When I was co-opted onto the Board in Autumn 2019 I brought to the Guild my industry expertise, a sizable professional network, my diverse cultural background and perspective, and my tangible experience as a full-time journalist working for one of the UK's leading trade magazines. Before Covid-19 forced us to freeze all events, I had successfully negotiated a free space for the Guild at Imbibe Live show. It was for us to promote the Guild's activities and our members' work to the UK's beer and wider drinks industry, and I am certainly keen to re-negotiate it next year. Indeed, my commitment remains to help the Guild build authority, remain relevant, and achieve its goals despite the current challenging circumstances, as well as work to help fellow members develop the necessary skills to succeed as communicators and maximise their chances to get commissions and work.

Katie Wiles:

Having been co-opted onto the Board in October 2019, I've spent the last nine months improving the Guild's offering and status for its membership. Most visibly, that has included taking on the ownership of the Guild's social media platforms.

Since joining, I've created a bespoke Facebook Group specifically for Guild members to share best practice, training and news, which now has 113 members. I've also taken on the management of the Guild's Twitter feed, actively following all our members and generating regular content, including BGBW MEMBER daily tweets to promote the work of our membership. Engagement in our Twitter feed has grown significantly through these measures, from an average of 2-3 tweets per month to updates every day.

I've also been working with the Board to improve our training opportunities during this lockdown period and recently led a joint seminar on the impact of COVID-19 on the beer industry with fellow board member Neil Walker. I've been a Guild member for many years, and it's been a delight to join the team to help the organisation grow.

Outside of the Guild, I head up the Communications department at the Campaign for Real Ale. Alongside managing CAMRA's communications channels, I've recently launched the CAMRA podcast *Pubs. Pints. People.* As the producer, I'm responsible for scripting, editing, hosting and all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into audio communications. I've also dabbled in beer writing in my own time, setting up a beer blog called Wiles About Beer and I regularly contribute to CAMRA's BEER magazine and What's Brewing.

I'm passionate about beer and can be found regularly sharing my favourite brews views on Twitter @wilesaboutbeer. I believe I can add value and expertise to the Guild's board if re-elected this year.

Matthew Curtis:

As a member of the Guild since 2012, and having previously sat on the board from June 2014 until June 2017, I have decided to stand for re-election as I believe the Guild Board of Directors needs strong representation from beer writers working in the role full time.

When I first joined the guild as a hobbyist, the tools and skills it gave me helped me turn my passion into a full time career. Since I began writing about beer almost 10 years ago, I have gone on to be awarded for my work by both the British and North American Beer Writers Guilds, work in an editorial role for US publication *Good Beer Hunting* and in May 2019 I co-founded my own publication *Pellicle Magazine*. Much of this is thanks to the efforts made by the Guild to improve the skills and awareness of its members. Were I elected to the board this time, I would be bringing with me a great deal more skills and experience than I possessed during my previous tenure.

I feel passionately about the beer writing profession (as well as podcasting, videography and photography) and want to ensure the guild is working properly for its members. If I am elected, I aim to bring to following ideas to the board, which I hope will help the Guild remain a progressive organisation that works for its members:

- Encourage the Guild to publicise leads for freelancers in its daily newsletter, and work with publishers to publish their rates to ensure writers are being compensated fairly.
- Take a lead from the North American Guild of Beer Writers and establish a diversity in beer writing grant in order to encourage more women, members for the LGBTQ community and BAME people to write about beer. I would offer my own publication *Pellicle* as a platform to help implement this.
- Work to establish the mentorship scheme for associate members that was in discussion when I was previously on the board.
- Campaign for a complete overhaul of the categories at our annual awards, so they are a true reflection of how beer writing functions in the modern age, further helping enhance the guilds impact both internally and externally.

Kate Oppenheim:

Kate Oppenheim is a journalist specialising in the beer and pub sector for the past three decades. A long-term supporter of the Guild and a judge of the Guild Awards over the years, Kate would like to offer more of her time and support to the Guild by standing to join its Board of Directors.

The Guild faces many challenges going forward, not least of which are how to secure new and increased financial support in order to provide greater assistance to members, along with new opportunities, from awards to training. She hopes her experiences and industry contacts will be useful in terms of both generating new ideas and bringing a fresh perspective to the Guild.

As a successful freelancer, having established her own business, KO-Media, 10 years ago, Kate is well-placed to support her potential fellow Directors in terms of helping to deliver projects to budget and deadline.

Testimonials (taken from KO-Media website):

"Kate has so much experience of the licensed trade as well as other circles she works in and is a pleasure to work alongside as the editor, producer and a friend. I'd highly recommend Kate to anyone wanting someone who produces great work, but also cares about the people and businesses she works with." Mike Clist CBII, non-executive director BII & industry consultant

"When I was assembling a judging panel for the Guild of Beer Writers Awards, Kate was an immediate choice: her experience as a writer, editor and publisher gives her an excellent perspective on the quality and readability of the submitted works. Kate was without doubt one of the best judges I've worked with on the Awards; she was also an informed and engaged participant, providing detailed feedback on entries, challenging others' views where necessary and guiding the judging panel towards a consensus decision. She also made a number of helpful suggestions as to how the Awards criteria could be improved, and new categories introduced to make the judging process fairer." Ros Shiel, organiser, Guild of Beer Writers Awards