

# THE RISING TUN



*The Old English word 'Tun' means a cask or barrel of beer*

AUTUMN 2008 Issue No: 87

*Essential reading for beer lovers everywhere*

## The joint real ale newsletter of Swindon & North Wiltshire and North West Wiltshire branches of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale)

Formally 'The Tun', brought to you previously, by Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA branch, who have now joined forces with North West Wiltshire CAMRA branch to bring you 'The Rising Tun' covering a much larger area and readership for North Wiltshire - Circulation 3000

**S**windon & North Wiltshire branch and North West Wiltshire branch of CAMRA have been supporting each other for many years in their activities, beer festivals and campaigning.

With many CAMRA members and beer, real ale & cider drinkers commuting daily over the invisible boundary that separate the branches, and the world getting 'ever smaller', we felt it was the right time to share information from further afield with you, our readers.

For those who frequently travel across North Wiltshire there will be more information for you in this newsletter, and for those who don't there hopefully may be something enclosed to tempt you to experience new places and new beers.

*Abigail Newton*

Chairperson  
North West Wiltshire CAMRA branch



### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- 'Focus On'  
The Great British Beer Festival 2008
- Bottled Beers - Spoilt for choice
- Local Pub News
- Latest news from North Wiltshire's Breweries
- Swindon's Autumn Beerex
- Beer Festivals & Joke Corner
- CAMRA Membership Information

# THE RISING TUN



'THE RISING TUN' is the newsletter of Swindon & North Wiltshire and North West Wiltshire CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) branches.

#### Published Quarterly:

March, June, September & December with each issue 3000 FREE copies are distributed to pubs and other drinking establishments across the Swindon, Chippenham and surrounding areas of North Wiltshire. Please email the editor if you would like to be included on the distribution list.

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#### Valuable contributions have been received for this issue from:

Ruth Shepherd, Abigail Newton,  
David Heavens, Chris James, and others.

#### Back issues:

All Swindon & North Wiltshire and North West Wiltshire CAMRA branches Real Ale news, can be found on our websites:

[www.swindoncamra.org.uk](http://www.swindoncamra.org.uk)

[www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk](http://www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk)

Please do share with fellow beer lovers this issue of 'The Rising Tun' and then dispose of it carefully.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the branch or CAMRA® Ltd.

[www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)

CAMPAIGNING FOR REAL ALE, PUBS AND  
DRINKERS' RIGHTS SINCE 1971

## Branch Diaries:

All meetings and social events are relaxed and friendly. Please feel free to come along and join in:

#### SWINDON & NORTH WILTSHIRE:

##### 1st October

The Harrow, Wanborough, SN4 0AE  
(8pm - branch monthly meeting)

##### 15th October

The Kings Arms, Wood Street, Swindon  
(Beer Festival meeting)

##### 5th November

The Kings Arms, Wood Street, Swindon  
(8pm - branch monthly meeting)

##### 3rd December

The Glue Pot, 5 Emlyn Sq, Swindon  
(8pm - branch monthly meeting)

##### 17th January 09

The Sunn Inn, The Street,  
Lydiard Millicent, SN5 3LU  
(Annual Branch Dinner)

#### NORTH WEST WILTSHIRE:

##### 9th September

The Talbot, Calne  
8pm - branch monthly meeting)

##### 14th October

The Pheasant, Chippenham  
(Branch AGM)

All CAMRA members and non-members are welcome to attend. Please do check our websites before setting off, for any of the above, in case of any last minute venue changes.

[www.swindoncamra.org.uk](http://www.swindoncamra.org.uk)

[www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk](http://www.nwwiltscamra.org.uk)

# National Cider & Perry Month - October 2008

**T**he choosing, pressing and blending of the fruit to make cider is just as much of a craft as making beer and produces a vast range of tastes, styles and aromas, similar to those produced in fine wine. Like wine, each year's fruit produces a unique vintage, so much so that cider and perry have been sometimes called 'The Wine of the West'.

October is a very active time for producers, especially for those who make only a small amount of cider. Harvest time for cider fruit is roughly from September to November and by October production is in full flow.

Unlike real ale production, which can happen at any time of the year, real cider & perry can only be made when the fruit is ripe. Great skill goes into producing both products. Great store is placed by the Craft Brewer in the quality of ingredients and variety of flavours created by the malt, hops, yeast and water used to brew the beer.

It is a Producer rather than a Brewer that makes cider & perry. They may use a mixture of bittersweet and bittersharp cider apples or sweet dessert apples, or a mixture of the two to make cider; but perry can only be made from specialized perry pears, which are high in natural tannin.

CAMRA already have the month of May set aside as Mild Month and following on the success of the Mild campaign, CAMRA has now set October aside as Cider & Perry Month.

Swindon's 22nd Annual Beer Festival between Thursday 30th Oct and Saturday 1st Nov will have a range of Ciders and Perries if you fancy giving them a try.

## Pub of the Year 2008

The Pub of the year is an annual competition held by CAMRA to find the "best" Pub in Britain.

Pubs are judged on a number of criteria which include:- Quality of Beer, Atmosphere/Style/ Décor, Service & Welcome, Clientele Mix, Sympathy with CAMRA Aims, Value for money.

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year competition is judged by the CAMRA membership. Each of the 200 branches vote for their favourite pub. The branch winners are entered into 16 regional competitions and then the 16 winners battle it out to make the Grand Final which consists of 4 pubs.

Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year 2008 – **The Five Bells** at Wootton Bassett. This is a worthy nominee because of the quality and range of its beers and the pub's atmosphere among it's other great attributes.

North West Wiltshire CAMRA Branch Pub of The Year 2008 - **The Bell Inn** at Lacock. This is the 5th year in a row that The Bell has won this award!! A really great pub and a must visit for anyone who has not been there before.

South West's regional shortlisted pub was **The Old Spot Inn**, Dursley, Gloucestershire which went on to be the overall winner

The Old Spot Inn is described in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2008 as "This 100 year old free house, named after the Gloucestershire Old Spot pig, has been sympathetically restored by its owner, Ric Sainty. The intimate atmosphere is enhanced by log fires and brewery memorabilia. As well as Uley's Old Ric, named after the owner, it offers five guest beers, mainly from micro-brewers, served in five separate drinking areas.

The wholesome menu is available 12-8pm on week days and 12-3pm at weekends. On the Cotswold Way, this convivial local is a popular watering hole for walkers. The secluded garden has a boules piste."

Certainly worth a visit and not too far away from our North Wiltshire area either.



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**Beer festivals in April and October**

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# The Great British Beer Festival 2008

Tuesday 5th August marked the start of a very special event on every CAMRA member's calendar.

It was that time of year when Earls Court, London, once again threw open its doors on the CAMRA 'Great British Beer Festival'. Literally the world's BIGGEST pub for 5 whole days!

Over 450 beers were served from British Breweries including golden ales, fruit beers, stouts and lagers; not to mention ciders, perries and British wines, bottled ales & over 200 foreign beers from around the world!

As a regular attendee for some years, I need to be quick to point out that it was not just for the bearded, sock & sandal wearing, rucksack carrying types. There was entertainment in the form of live music throughout the week, traditional pub games for the competitive and for the more studious or curious; tutored tastings with some of the worlds leading experts on



beer (which was ticketed in advance). The organizers had also brought in an array of catering stands offering everything from Sausages & Mash to Thai dishes.

Most beer festivals will vote for a 'Beer of the Festival' and the Great British Beer Festival is no different, although here is called the 'Champion Beer of Britain' (CBOB). 'Alton's Pride' brewed by Triple fff Brewery in Hampshire was judged to be the best beer in Britain by a panel of brewers, beer writers and journalists. The finalists are chosen on a regional basis via a local tasting panel and

regional beer judging competitions. This ensures a good geographical spread for the 60 finalists of this prestigious award.

*Ruth Shepherd*

**Swindon & North Wiltshire CAMRA Branch**

## To help ensure your survival I have drawn on past experiences (and the help of others less inebriated) to bring you the following essential Beer Festival Survival Guide...

- Rucksacks may have a reputation as the Beer Spotters best friend, but if you can live with the shame for just a day, you'll be glad you did when you leave laden with items you never anticipated buying - handy for carrying a bottle of water too.
- Don't panic drink! With so many beers to choose from, it's easy to get carried away. Halves or thirds are a safer choice if you're intent on trying more than a couple of beers.
- Experiment. So you may only like lager or maybe dark beers are your thing, or maybe you haven't a clue where to start! Talk to the bar staff. They usually know a fair bit about the beers or can find someone who does. Challenge your taste buds and try something different!
- Etiquette. Don't be afraid to ask for a small taster if you're not sure, however, you will be politely asked to move on if you're considered to be taking liberties...
- Food. You will need to eat to counteract the beer intake and there are usually plenty of options even for the most fussy of eaters - unless you've made full use of the rucksack and come prepared....
- Take plenty of cash. A lot of beer festivals today use a token system which you pay for up front, but sometimes it can be cash bars only. Kerching!!!
- Be nice to staff! We're all volunteers at CAMRA beer festivals, having given up precious time off or holiday time to ensure you have the best experience. It's hard work, but its fun which is why we do it. Join CAMRA and find out for yourself!

Hope to see you at a beer festival near by soon!

# *Spoilt for Choice*

AT WESTHOLME STORES, GORING, BERKSHIRE.



**A**lthough this is a little way out of both our CAMRA branch areas, this shop deserves a hearty mention and certainly a visit if you like your bottled real ales & beers.

Within an hour's drive from Swindon is the lovely riverside village of Goring-on-Thames. Like so many countryside villages, Goring has a very small selection of local shops. One of which is a local convenience store called 'Westholme Stores' part of the Londis chain. Unlike other Londis or other village convenience stores you may have chanced upon, this one is a jewel in the crown of bottle beers. Goring's Londis stocks over 600 bottled beers from around the world. The main bulk of these are made up of bottle beers from the British Isles. There is also a fine selection of Belgian and European beers for the discerning foreign tongues amongst you.

The owner, a friendly chap called Jack Patel, seeks out 'Real Ales in the Bottle' from all over Britain. So it a continuing pleasure to revisit his store as there is something new to be had each and every time. A recent visit threw up beers from Devon, Cornwall, Yorkshire, Norfolk and Scotland, amongst others. Jack is only too willing to help you if you are stumped for what to choose from the extensive range on offer and with around 100 'Bottled Conditioned' beers to choose from it's always worth the journey.

If you're not pushed for time, park up near the Thames and take a walk along its river bank, as it is a very pretty village with many landscape photographic opportunities. Just make sure you arrive with your camera and space in your car as you're sure not to leave Goring-on-Thames empty handed.

**Dave Heavens - Swindon & North Wilts CAMRA branch**



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# The Value of a Drink

'Sometimes when I reflect back on all the wine I drink I feel shame. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the vineyards and all of their hopes and dreams. If I didn't drink this wine, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. Then I say to myself, 'It is better that I drink this wine and let their dreams come true than be selfish and worry about my liver.' ~ *Jack Handy*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may leave you wondering what the hell happened to your bra and panties among other things.

'I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day.' ~ *Frank Sinatra*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

'When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading.' ~ *Henny Youngman*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may lead you to think people are laughing WITH you.

'24 hours in a day, 24 beers in a case. Coincidence? I think not.' ~ *Stephen Wright*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause you to think you can sing.

'When we drink, we get drunk. When we get drunk, we fall asleep. When we fall asleep, we commit no sin. When we commit no sin, we go to heaven. So, let's all get drunk and go to heaven!' ~ *Brian O'Rourke*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause pregnancy.

'Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy.' ~ *Benjamin Franklin*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol is a major factor in dancing like your dad or worse, your grandad.

'Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, but the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza.' ~ *Dave Barry*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them.

To some it's a six-pack, to me it's a Support Group. Salvation in a can! ~ *Dave Howell*

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may make you think you can logically converse with members of the opposite sex without spitting.

And saving the best for last, as explained by Cliff Clavin, of Cheers. One afternoon at Cheers, Cliff Clavin was explaining the 'Buffalo Theory' to his buddy Norm. Here's how it went:

'Well ya see, Norm, it's like this... A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers.

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol may make you think you are whispering when you are not.

# Beer Festivals

## SEPTEMBER 2008

- 5th** **Burbage Beer & Music Festival** (50+ ales) Red Lion Field, East Sands, Burbage.  
[www.burbagefestival.co.uk](http://www.burbagefestival.co.uk) for more details
- 13th-14th** **9th Somerset Beer Festival** (100+ ales+ciders) West Somerset Railway Station, Minehead.  
[www.wsr.org.uk/camra2008](http://www.wsr.org.uk/camra2008) for more details
- 19th-20th** **Langford Beer Festival**  
Langford Sports & Social Club, Steeple Langford Rec Ground, Salisbury.  
Email: [info@langfordbeerfestival.org.uk](mailto:info@langfordbeerfestival.org.uk) or call Steve Wyre on 01722 790131.
- 20th** **Wootton Bassett RFC Beer Festival**, Stoneover Lane, SN4 8QX. BBQ & Live Music.  
From 12pm £5 entry with free glass & 4 beer tokens. Tickets from Wootton Bassett Rugby Football Club on Sundays between 12-1pm from clubhouse.
- 21st** **The Town Council & Wiltshire Times** are holding a beer fest at the Civic in Trowbridge from 1:00pm till midnight. Selection of local ales on tap + food and live music. £5 entry fee with free glass and programme.
- 26th-28th** **1st North Cotswold Beer Festival** (40+ ales + ciders) Moreton-in-Marsh Cricket Club, Batsford Road, Moreton-in-Marsh.  
[www.gloscamra\\_media@yahoo.co.uk](http://www.gloscamra_media@yahoo.co.uk) for more details.
- 26th-27th** **Wessex Beer Festival** (Over 100 ales & ciders) Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallett, Somerset. [www.wessexbeerfestival.co.uk](http://www.wessexbeerfestival.co.uk) for more details

## OCTOBER 2008

- 18th-19th** **31st Bath Beer Festival** (over 70 ales) The Pavillion, North Parade Road, Bath.  
[www.bathandbordercamra.org.uk](http://www.bathandbordercamra.org.uk) for more details
- 20th-31st** **Wetherspoons 'Full Moon' Beer Festival** (35+ ales) Sir Daniel Arms, The Groves & The Savoy pubs in Swindon town centre all participating.
- 30th - 1st** **Swindon Beer Festival** (over 100 ales + ciders & perries) Steam Museum, Kemble Drive, Swindon. [www.swindoncamra.org.uk](http://www.swindoncamra.org.uk) for more details

Please keep checking our website for details on forthcoming beer festivals  
See [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) for an up to date calendar of all national CAMRA organized beer festivals.

**Joke Corner:** Send us in your best 'Beer Goggles' picture for inclusion in 'Joke Corner' and/or your best/worst beer or pub jokes.



Polar Bear walks into a pub and asks for a pint of bitter ..... shandy.  
Barman asks 'Why the big pause?'  
Polar Bear replies "Because I'm a Polar Bear".

# "I'M ONLY HERE FOR THE BEER."



## THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ASCOT RACECOURSE BEER FESTIVAL

Friday 26th and Saturday 27th September 2008

- Exclusive HALF PRICE admission for CAMRA members - prices from just £5 on Friday and £7.50 on Saturday.
- Excellent programme of racing.
- Over 130 real ales, ciders and perries to sample with tasting notes. All at £1.25 per half pint and £2.50 per pint.
- Hot and cold food available all day.
- Gates and Bars open at 11am. Last orders 4.15pm on Friday and 5.45pm on Saturday.
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