

# LOOK

## YEAST!



ISSUE 4

AUTUMN/WINTER 2025

Potton Apple Day - 28th September



### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

Retirement of Kevin Machin. Engineers Arms  
Beer Styles: An Introduction...

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

Campaign For Real Ale

wetherspoon  
The Crown Hotel, Biggleswade

Wed 1 – Sun 12 Oct

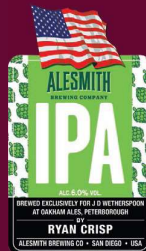
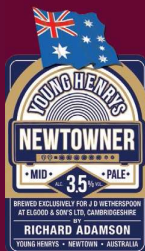
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for the facts  
[drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk) [jdwetherspoon.com](http://jdwetherspoon.com)

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## Branch Diary (all dates and venues subject to confirmation)

| When                     | What                          | Where                              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 11 September             | Ely Pub Crawl                 | By Train                           |
| 11-14 September          | 4th Langford Beer Festival    | Plough, Langford                   |
| 14 September - from 10am | Vintage Bus running day       | various start and finish locations |
| 15 September             | Branch Meeting                | Crown Hotel, Biggleswade           |
| 27 September             | Peel Fest Five                | Sir William Peel, Sandy            |
| 28 September             | Potton Apple Day              | St Mary's Church Hall, Potton      |
| 1- 4 October             | Bedford Beer & Cider Festival | Bedford Corn Exchange              |
| 20 October               | Branch Meeting                | Admiral, Clifton                   |

## East Bedfordshire CAMRA Committee

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Chairman                | Barry Price   |
| Vice-Chairman           | Chris Overman |
| Secretary/Contact       | Peter Josling |
| Treasurer               | Rob Pullinger |
| Membership Secretary    | Barry Price   |
| Public Affairs Contact  | Dave Strong   |
| Pubs Data Coordinator   | Barry Price   |
| Look Yeast Editor       | Peter Josling |
| Brewery Liaison Officer | Dave Strong   |
| Cider Representative    | Tim Naisbitt  |
| Pub Protection Officer  | Andrew McWhir |
| Social Secretary        | Peter Josling |

**THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2025**

CAMRA Campaign for Real Ale

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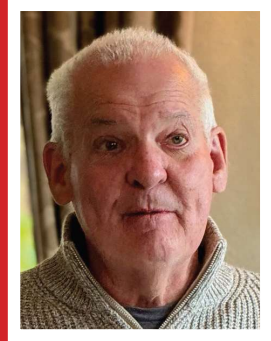
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# A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

East Bedfordshire CAMRA Branch

Since the last issue of 'Look Yeast!' I'm pleased to recognise the efforts which Branch Members and our publicans have made to ensure the continuation of the availability of Real Ales, Craft Ales and Real Ciders. The culmination of the Branch's efforts, together with those of members of Biggleswade Conservative Club, was another very successful Biggleswade Beer Festival – the third. Each has surpassed the previous one in terms of attendance and each year it seems to have attracted imbibers from further afield.



Our publicans continue to serve a wide range of ales – providing that their parent companies permit them to do so – and all can usually be found in very good to excellent condition in the East Bedfordshire CAMRA Branch area. If they're not then tell the person serving you.

Some of the readers of 'Look Yeast' may never have tasted Real Ale, or did so some considerable time ago and have never 'recovered' from the experience, but it may be difficult to believe that real ales now come with a variety of different flavours ranging from sour (a particularly Belgian characteristic and fairly rare from British brewers) to sweet - some stouts, milk stouts and fruit infused beers fall into this category - with a massive variety of flavours in between.

Licensees who serve a wide range of ales will sometimes offer a 'taster' so that the drinker can judge whether or not the characteristics will suit their palate and many of our publicans will happily give you a sample to try if you ask politely.

Give it a go – you don't know what you're missing!

## Barry

### DISCLAIMER

Look Yeast!, East Beds CAMRA and CAMRA Ltd accept no responsibility for errors that may occur within this publication, and the views expressed are those of their individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the editor or committee

### ARTICLES & CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome contributions that will benefit our readers, to submit an article, please email [secretary@eastbeds.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@eastbeds.camra.org.uk)

### ADVERTISING

Advertise your Pub/Venue/Special Event or local business. Look Yeast is issued 3 times a year and distributed to pubs, clubs and other outlets in the region.

Please contact LivingLife Publications for more information and to request a Media Guide.

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# WHERE TO STOP

by Roger Stokes

Pubs provide convenient places for rest and refreshment on a day out – but how do you find one? The Good Beer Guide has two major weaknesses in this situation. First is its size. Second is the way it is organized County boundaries can be very wavy and identifying local towns and villages can be tiresome. An ancillary problem is that local CAMRA members need to have decided the pub regularly supplies good quality cask ale. More on that later.

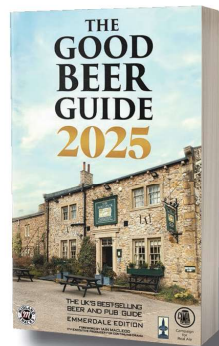
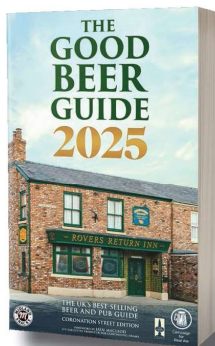
CAMRA has answers to these issues – the GBG app. Your phone knows where you are and the app has the full listing of pubs in the latest edition of the Good Beer Guide. These are organised in distance from where you happen to be.

It's certainly true that there are friendly pubs that are not in the Guide but the app is also useful here. The app also draws on the broader CAMRA database of pubs and you can consult the full selection of pubs in the area or those that serve food at lunchtimes. However you use the app it's a useful tool for days out in an area you don't know.

Both the Guide and the app rely on volunteers to keep the information accurate and up to date as well as the selection of entries. If you are a CAMRA member then you can help with this. You may have found a gem of a pub with beer in superb condition that isn't listed. The Beer Scoring System (accessible through the app among other ways) means members can score the quality of any cask beers they come across. Submitting a score draws the local branch's attention to it as worth checking. Good licensees deserve our support and this draws attention to them.

Beer scores will be even more important in the future as from the 2027 edition of the Guide they are to be a significant factor in the selection of pubs for inclusion.

Download and use the app to help the process along or visit [www.goodbeerguide.org.uk](http://www.goodbeerguide.org.uk)





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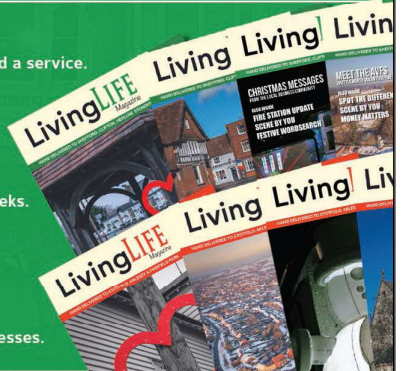
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# THE DOPEY OLD PEDALLERS

by Chris Freeman

Notice from posts in the media that the Cycle Tour of Britain incorporates several roads in East Bedfordshire. I would like to think that they have been inspired by the resounding success of East Beds CAMRA in running an annual cycle ride through the region, often straying into neighbouring territory. This year was no exception, with us including three North Herts Pubs. Neighbouring branches were accordingly invited along so whilst our core peloton of half a dozen riders was largely made up from old hands we were pleased to see a couple of new faces from both Beds and Herts.



We started off at the Half Moon in Hitchin. Whereas in previous years most of us would have cycled all the way there as a warm up to a well earned pint most riders elected to take the train to keep their legs fresh for the main ride. I started here with Bread and Butter from Vocation, a nice easy drink not going too strong too soon.

When all parties were assembled and suitably fuelled we set off for our next destination, Garden City Brewery in Letchworth. The uphill slope here could possibly be deemed to be the “Mountain Stage” of our tour and it was at this point that I realised that my recently replaced derailleur required further adjustment as the chain was skipping under load. I advised the others to carry on whilst I nursed the offending machinery along but still arrived at the bar before they had finished ordering. I decided that the Lemon Drop might prove suitably refreshing after the aforementioned exertions.

We moved on to the Orange Tree in Baldock. We were expecting good things here and were not disappointed. I sampled both a Burton Bridge and a Buntingford Oatmeal Stout. Both in perfect condition as is to be expected from a pub that has since won the CAMRA East Central Regional Pub of the Year.

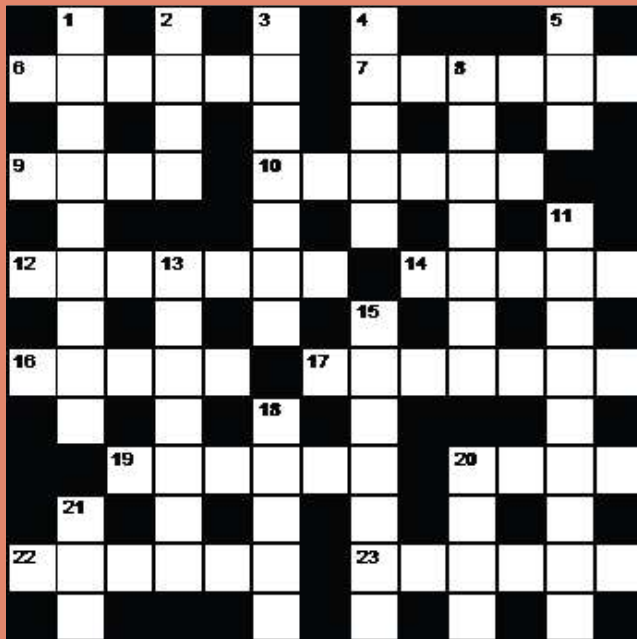
The next stage took us back into home ground and the Stag at Stotfold where I went for a pleasant Three Swords from Kirkstall. The pub is a previous winner of the branch community POTY and there was certainly a nice feel of a Sunday afternoon local about the place. Our next stop was the Old Oak at Arlesey. I’m afraid my notes appear to have run out here, so I can’t say for certain what I had, only that it was most welcome.

Our final stop was the Engineers Arms, our last chance for the ride to come through with Kevin still at the pub. I’m sure his services to promoting ale within the branch and beyond will be well covered elsewhere in this issue and he will be missed. Again, my beer records at this stage are like my singing in that the notes are very hit and miss but I recall that we rounded off the ride in the usual style.

Finally, I feel duty bound to point out that the title of this piece is in no way intended to cast aspersions on the wit or age of the participants. For those who have not yet twigged, it is merely a nod to the passing of the great Tom Lehrer.

# THE YEAST CROSSWORD

Can you complete our tricky crossword? Answers on P15



## ACROSS

- 6 Pierre's yesterday, when taking in start and end, is not so fine. (6)  
 7 Classical Greek style is about right to be absurdly annoying (6)  
 9 See 5 Down  
 10 Two points about mad peer of the realm or realms (6)  
 12 A very loud set of tunes that participants would prefer to keep quiet? (7)  
 14 Perry maybe, could be free, for mother and child (5)  
 16 A drawback? 5-15-9, 11-2-3, 22-20 and 4 don't see having one as such (5)  
 17 Brazilian diplomacy or what may be needed when it breaks down? (4,3)  
 19 Souvlaki not ok when stirred - that's how it looks (6)  
 20 Top's bottom when shut is opened out (4)  
 22/20D Regional 16 winner, greater one excited (6,4)  
 23 Examination shows I left local river after beer. (1,5)

## DOWN

- 1 I hear this could be an excuse to drink beer - duck! (9)  
 2 Two learners on motorway move haphazardly (4)  
 3 Berry we pulped to get drinks here (7)  
 4 Headgear for a smart joint (5)  
 5/15/9 Distinguished officer is well imperial at sea (3,7,4)  
 8 Lost lad is all at sea and has been for quite some time (3,4)  
 11 Market town with pop up shops I hear? (9)  
 13 Summons results in a ruling being heard (7)  
 15 See 5  
 18 Slippery drug smugglers? (5)  
 20 See 22 Across  
 21 Fine for cider and wine maybe, less so for hostelries (3)

# A FAREWELL TO ARMS!

The Branch this month sadly sees the retirement of one of its favourite Landlords, Kevin Machin.

Kevin became Landlord of The Engineers Arms in Henlow in 1989 which was at the time a Charlie Wells pub, when they decided to sell it Kevin bought it and it has remained a Free House since, so after 36 years he has decided it is time to retire. The pub is now owned by Punch Taverns and Kevin leaves at the end of August.

Over those 36 years Kevin has operated 10 pumps selling an assortment of Real Ale and has been an ardent supporter of CAMRA. Running Brewery Trips, Beer Tours, Brewery Tap take overs, A Beer Festival in October, not to forget the many pleasant trips to Dinslaken in Nord Rhine Westphalia, Germany the pubs official twin town. He has been constantly in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide during this time and regularly winning Best Pub of the Year at Branch Level, County Level, Regional Area and once nearly won the CAMRA UK Pub of the Year.



On 9th August the Branch & County gathered at the Engineers Arms for a presentation to honour the above. There was a good attendance from all the Bedfordshire Branches and also North Herts Branch.

First Roger Stokes, Beds Area Coordinator presented Kevin with a Special Awards Certificate recognising his 36 years from the Bedfordshire Area. Then Barry Price, East Beds Branch Chairman presented a Special Awards Certificate in recognition of this service then going onto say *"Thanks' for Thirty-Six Years of Great Beer, a wonderful atmosphere and unwavering support for CAMRA"*

Barry then explained that the Branch felt it should give Kevin something more personal and presented him with a Derby FC (Kevin supports them) shirt with 2 off the Engineers Logos on, Kevin taken aback thanked Barry. Then Peter Josling, Branch Secretary stepped up and explained that the Branch had been split over what to get Kevin and as such decided to buy both. He then presented Kevin with a Miners Lamp with "Kevin Machin" The Engineers Arms Logo "Landlord 1989-2025" engraved on the glass and "Thank You for the Days" "Presented by East Beds CAMRA" on the plinth. In an emotional speech Kevin reflected on his time as the Landlord and thank all those present. Peter Josling then lead 3 cheers for him.

***We all wish Kevin and Sharon a well deserved Retirement and wish them well.***



# RUTLAND CAMRA BEER FESTIVAL, OAKHAM

by Phil Crate

A group of CAMRA members from the Engineers Arms went to the Rutland CAMRA Beer Festival held in the County Museum in Oakham on Friday 27 June 2025.

We travelled by train using our Senior Railcards splitting the ticket Biggleswade to Peterborough and Whittlesea to Oakham. This saved £8.15 compared to the Biggleswade to Oakham return. We arrived at Oakham at 12.20.



We called in at Jinkys where the Parish Special Bitter 3.9% (The Parish Brewery) was sampled, unfortunately it tasted slightly vinegary. On a previous trip to Oakham, it had been very good.

We then headed to the County Museum where the beer festival was being held.



After paying for a glass and vouchers, we entered in to the courtyard where normally old farm carts and other machinery is displayed.

There was live music with the provided seating being straw bales and the barrels of beer were kept in the shade to keep them cool.

There were 5 Bars available:

- **Cask Ale Bar** selling **Blonde Ales, Traditional Bitters, Dark Beers and Bottled Beers**
- **Keg Bar** selling **eight beers with ABVs ranging from 3.4% to 12.0%**
- **Cider and Perry Bar** selling **eight ciders and two perrys.**
- **Sparkling Wine and Soft Drinks Bar** selling **Prosecco and a selection of soft drinks**
- **Gin Bar** selling **an unknown number of gins as they were not listed in the Summary Drinks list.**

The Cask Ale had 22 Blonde ales available, but as I prefer Brown and Dark beers, I did not sample them.

I did sample the Traditional Beers starting with O. G. Best Bitter 4.2% (Only with Love Brewery) this had a good flavour and very nice taste. This was followed by the Hopshackle Best Bitter 4.3% (Bowlers Brewery) I found it was weaker in flavour compared to the O.G Best Bitter.

Next was the Waterfront 4.8% (Neptune Brewery) this was light brown in colour and had a slight citrus flavour. The final Traditional Beer was the Burrough Bitter 4.8% (Parish Brewery) which had



nice bitter taste.

Having tried the four Traditional Bitters and some food, I then moved onto the Dark Beers starting with the Railway Porter 4.8% (Five Points Brewery). This was the nicest beer of the day. This was followed by the Jolly Collier Porter 5.0% (Jolly Boys Brewery) an unfiltered beer that was vegan friendly, though you couldn't tell it was unfiltered due to the porter being very dark in colour. Finally, my last beer was the Stout 4.5% (Moor Brewery) a very good stout. Time prevented me from trying the last dark beer on offer Heading Home 3.4% (Wiper & True Brewery) a traditional mild.



I found it disappointing that there were only eight Traditional/Dark beers available compared to the twenty-two blonde beers on offer. I would have liked more Traditional beers to be on offer.

It was now time to head to the railway station to catch the train home, only stopping on the way to buy some Melton Mowbray pork pies from the Butchers.

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# BEER STYLES: AN INTRODUCTION...

by Michael Parks

A beer style is a name given to a category of beers with similar characteristics which can be distinguished from another category of beers. The characteristics used to define a beer style often include taste (sweet, sour, bitter), flavour (chocolate, toffee, figs), aroma, appearance (colour, clarity), alcoholic strength and mouthfeel (watery, smooth, thick).



CAMRA categorizes beers into 12 primary style categories for its annual Champion Beer of Britain competition (CBoB) for real ales. Those 12 categories are: milds; session bitters; premium bitters; session blond, golden and pale ales; premium blond, golden and pale ales; India Pale Ales (IPAs); session porters and stouts; premium porters and stouts; brown, red and old ales and strong milds; barley wines and strong ales; differently produced specialty beers and flavoured specialty beers. Session and premium styles are distinguished by the percentage of alcohol by volume (ABV). Some styles are further segregated into substyles (e.g., session porters, session dry stouts, session milk stouts, etc.). For CBoB, CAMRA judges select a winner in each of the 12 style categories and then judge these against each other to select the Champion.

CAMRA's focus is on UK real ales. In other countries where beer brewing and drinking traditions are different, alternative style guidelines have been developed to include beers such as American, German and Czech lagers and Belgian fruited sour beers. In the USA, the Beer Judge Certification Program's (BJCP) style guidelines use 34 categories and well over 100 different styles and substyles for the world's beers with commonly available commercial examples. The European Beer Consumers Union's (EBCU) style guidelines classify the beers of the world into 6 broad groups which are then separated into well over 100 styles and substyles.

As you would hope, the various sets of style guidelines generally ascribe the same characteristics to the same style of beer. Where they differ, generally, is in recognizing a smaller, more narrowly defined style or substyle with more specifically described characteristics (such as geographic area where the beer is/was produced).

Style guidelines can be useful for beer drinkers when selecting new beers to try. For example, if you know your favourite beer is a strong porter then there's a good chance you'll like a strong porter from another brewer. For this to work though, the style of the new beer must be accurately labelled, and this is where the actual usefulness of style guidelines falls short of its potential. Brewers are not required to use any of the multiple style guidelines when describing or labelling their beers and there's no requirement to identify a beer's style accurately.

CAMRA is helping real ale drinkers with this. For CBoB, CAMRA ignores a beer's label and assigns it a style based on the characteristics in the CAMRA style guidelines. All the beers tasted by CAMRA tasting panels are assigned to the appropriate CAMRA styles and a drinker can view the style for over 15,000 real ales on CAMRA's website. CAMRA's website also has information about its beer styles. If you're a CAMRA member you can sign in to CAMRA's website and record in your personal list beers you've tasted and whether you've liked them or not.

For more information on CAMRA's beer style guidelines, CBoB, the style of a particular beer and more, visit the Beers & Breweries section of CAMRA's website at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk).

For more information about the BJCP's beer style guidelines see their website at [www.bjcp.org](http://www.bjcp.org).

For more information about the EBCU's beer style guidelines see the Beer Styles section of the EBCU's website at [www.ebcu.org](http://www.ebcu.org).



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