

This is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Lichfield, Sutton and Tamworth branch of CAMRA.

Contact us at
LST.Camra@gmail.com

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LAST Orders

No 118 Aug/Sept 2026

Coming soon:



**TAMWORTH
BEER
FESTIVAL**

CAMRA membership in July: 141,168



Inside: *Bucharest Bars
Big Beer Badlands
Barlow Spotlight*

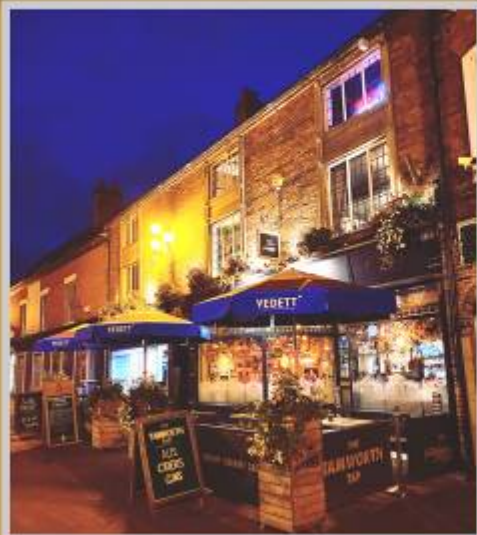
*Just A Minute
County POTYs
The Italian Job*

The free bi-monthly CAMRA newsletter
for Lichfield, Atherstone,
Sutton Coldfield & Tamworth

now also serving the
Nuneaton & Bedworth
CAMRA region

TAMWORTH TAP

THREE TIMES CAMRA NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR!



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LAST Orders

The magazine of the Lichfield, Sutton and Tamworth branch of CAMRA, also serving Nuneaton & Bedworth branch.

6 issues per year, issued at the beginning of the months of Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec. The magazine is free and circulated widely through the branch areas and beyond.

Contributions are welcomed, pub news particularly. Contact the editor.

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Full page: £80

You can provide your own artwork (around 300 dpi for the best results) or we provide a free design service. Contact the editor.

EDITOR

Adam Randall
LST.Camra@gmail.com
01827 711 528
07969 577 673

The opinions expressed in Last Orders are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA Ltd or its branches



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Missing out on Last Orders? We distribute the magazine widely throughout the branch areas and beyond, but if you would like to sign up for email delivery (PDF format, approximately 3MB per issue) then please email us

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Branch contact:
Charlotte Richards info@nuneaton.camra.org.uk

Chair Chat

Our huge congratulations to everyone involved with our two County Pub of the Year winners – read more on pages 16-17! Planning for this year's Beer Festival is now in full swing, and there's still time for local businesses to become involved through our sponsorship packages, which represent excellent value while helping us deliver one of the branch's flagship events. If you know of a business that would like to support real ale and our local pub scene, we'd love to hear from them.

Our August branch meeting promises to be something special as we descend on the **Samuel Barlow**, Alvecote – arriving by narrowboat! We believe this could be a CAMRA first, and it's another example of how our branch enjoys combining great pubs with memorable experiences. We hope as many members as possible will join us for what should be a fantastic evening.

We're also in the final stages of discussions with the Chamber of Commerce to establish a dedicated hospitality and local pub group for Lichfield and Tamworth. The aim is to ensure our pubs have a stronger collective voice within the wider business community while remaining firmly aligned with CAMRA's values. Together, we'll be championing our local pubs and lobbying for a fairer deal on issues such as VAT, National Insurance and business rates – areas that continue to place significant pressure on our vital hospitality sector.

George Greenaway, LST Chairman



Date For Your Diary

Calling all caped crusaders! This year's Tamworth CAMRA beer festival is rapidly approaching, and the theme this time is Batman. It's 60 years since the dynamic duo (or trio with Batwoman!) first appeared on TV, and those classic early series spawned a whole sequence of big box office movies, moving on from comedy camp to dark and brooding.

As usual we are based in the Assembly Rooms in the centre of town. It runs from Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th September, from 11am each day. There will be the usual wide selection of real ales, from the hard-to-find to specials from local breweries, and of course a range of ciders. The venue's café bar will offer a further range of drinks including spirits and soft drinks, plus hot and cold food.

Friday night will feature live music from popular local band *Johnny & The High Jives*, serving up authentic 50's & 60's Rock'n'Roll and Doo Wop.

Fest entry costs for non-members are the same as last year, and of course CAMRA members get in for free. Should you join CAMRA at the festival, we'll refund your entry fee. Entry includes a free programme, though you'll need to hire the commemorative festival tankard, refundable if you don't want to keep it. Beyond that, you just need to buy some beer tokens, with any value you don't use being refundable or donatable to charity. See you there!



32ND TAMWORTH BEER FESTIVAL

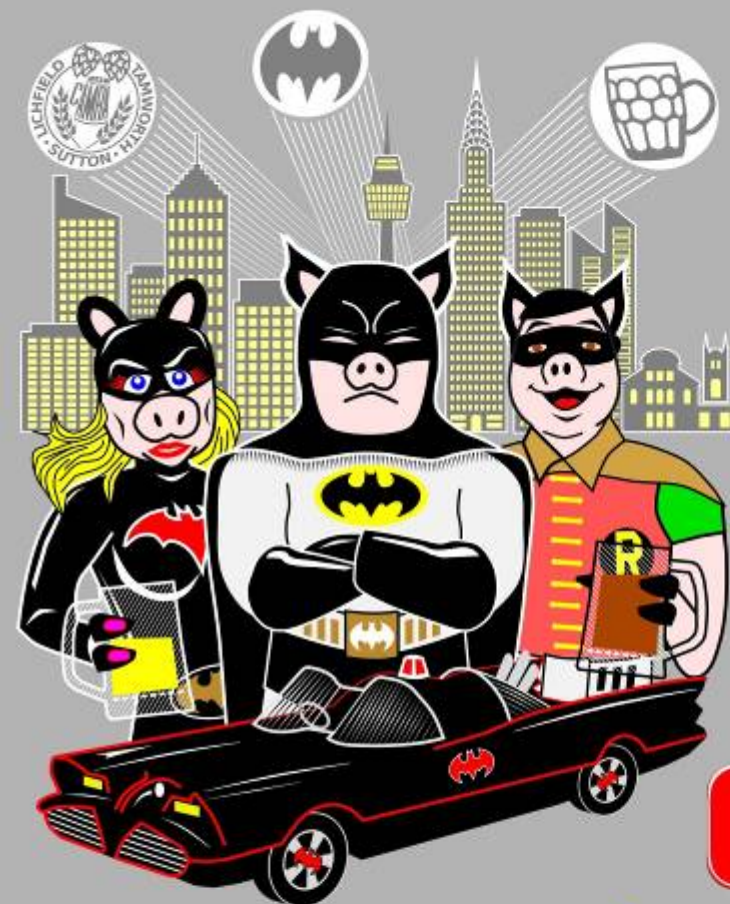
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Bucharest Bars

After an evening arrival in Bucharest, Romania for a four night stay I headed out for a few craft ales in the Old Town. Here there are numerous bars plus many grand and impressive buildings interspersed with characterful back streets and alleys. The **Ground Zero Taproom**, right, was fairly basic inside with a painted concrete floor and wooden tables, benches and stools within. It also had some colourful beer-related murals painted on panels in the ceiling. Outdoor seating under shady trees was also an option. My first ale was *Easy Rider*, a session IPA which was easy on the palate. To accompany this, a flavoursome meaty sausage with mustard, bread and pickles was the ideal companion. The following *Cherry Sour* had distinctive cherry notes, a good palate cleanser before the contrasting *Black Hole* porter. This was chocolatey, with liquorice and roast barley notes and a lingering assertive hoppiness.



The nearby **Beer Station Lipscani** sits on a touristy and characterful street corner. A herring-boned red-tiled floor welcomed me inside where there were ample tables and chairs with comfy seating plus some separate booths. This bar as most others had outdoor seating also with many people taking advantage of it in the glorious weather, I chose the cool, airy interior and a Clandestin *Mr.ICE*, a West Coast IPA. This was similar to a NEIPA but with more mouthfeel and a piney, resinous hoppiness. For a nightcap the Wicked Barrel *Black On Black*, an oatmeal stout, was a good choice being smooth, chocolatey, rich and roasty.



Next day some sightseeing was enjoyed to work up a thirst. As well as museums, churches and cathedrals to visit, there are statues to admire such as the quirky and unusual example pictured left. The **Ironic Taproom** and its adjacent brewery is ironically named as it's hard to locate, with no current outside signage or other clues as to its location. It also shares the building with a café and a fast food outlet on either side. After a couple of passes I was within and choosing from the fifteen listed ales available.

Ironically Internationally Unknown was a hazy IPA and with its fruity hoppiness was more like a NEIPA. The Maktoob *Temara* porter was truer to its style, with noticeable roast barley and bitter elements plus chocolate notes in the finish. A couple of the Ironic sours sampled were not particularly sour, in common with the others I got to try on this trip: maybe Romanians have a sweet tooth. The *Pineapple & Raspberry* was pleasing with both fruits evident in the aroma and taste. Ultima *Apricot & Nectarine* sour had an intense peachy aroma and taste with apricot notes in the background.

Almost opposite Stavropoleos Church is the **Caru' Cu Bere**, a beer hall in a magnificent old building, with smartly dressed waiters complementing the package in the wonderful two-level interior, pictured right. There was a reasonable choice of ten craft ales; I chose the house beer, a pleasant lager-style refresher



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sampled while relaxing and savouring the internal grandeur and atmosphere.

Delta Craft Beer Taproom is a cosy and intimate bar on two levels, with a more comfy but smaller low-ceilinged upstairs room. From the reasonable choice of ten ales, Delta Beer *War Pigs* was a cherry and passion fruit sour with cherry overriding the less assertive passion fruit. Maktoob *Bitter 16* was a very enjoyable West Coast IPA with a juicy maltiness and resiny hoppiness.

Street-corner **Pardon Pub & Taproom** has a colourful interior, right, and beer-related posters adorning the walls. *One Beer Too Late* was a strawberry and rhubarb sour with rhubarb in the aroma and taste with strawberry notes coming through in the finish. Carol Beer *Porter* was smooth on the palate with liquorice, chocolate and roast barley elements all combining to give a nicely balanced beer.



After breakfast and some more sightseeing the next day I visited **Tap Craft Beer**, on a quiet back street. Eighteen of the twenty tap ales were Romanian, a high proportion similar to that in other bars visited. An unusual tap offering was Aecht Schlenkerla *Rauchbier Märzen*, the top dog of smoked beers which unfortunately had run out. Not being able to enjoy one of my favourite smoked beers, I consoled myself with an Ultima *I Love Cinnamon*. This was an apricot, blood orange and cinnamon sour with all three elements combining well. However, OneTwo *Raspberry Crush*, a raspberry and mint sour, worked really well, with both ingredients giving a perfect balance. The final choice here was Anagram *Dark Light*, an American-style porter with coffee and chocolate lingering on the palate and an assertive bitter finish.



Zăganu Taproom is a street-corner bar on two levels with unusual beer bottle light fittings, left. It is more spacious upstairs with comfier seating including a leather Chesterfield sofa and two armchairs. Their *Hefeweizen* was cloudy, fruity and refreshing, whilst the amber-hued *IPA* had a sweet malt background balanced by an assertive piney hoppiness which lingered on the palate.

Over the next couple of days I did more sightseeing before visiting the **Hop Hooligans Taproom** with its basic, arty interior and a varied selection of beer books to browse through while imbibing. Their *Teoria - Plot Twist* whisky-inspired sour was disappointing compared to their *Heartbreaker*, a hibiscus, lime and jalapeno IPA. It had a flowery aroma and flavour with a warming chilli finish with the lime lurking in the background. The Wicked Barrel *Black On Black* was a worthy final choice here.

For the remainder of my stay I revisited some of the other bars. The Romanians are warm and friendly, most speaking English and often using it instead of their native tongue. The country is conveniently geared up for credit card transactions, with few cash machines evident as a result. It's not as cheap as I expected it to be, with beers around £5-£7 for an equivalent UK measure, with tipping expected but optional. Direct flights are available from Birmingham.

Eric Randall

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Spotlight on ... The Samuel Barlow

The **Samuel Barlow** at Alvecote has welcomed new licensees Carol and Nick Tatlow. Occupying an enviable position on the banks of the Coventry Canal, the Barlow has long been a favourite with walkers, boaters, cyclists and pub-goers alike. Carol and Nick are keen to build on those strengths, with cask ale prominent in their vision.

Their commitment is simple: excellent cellar management, properly served beer and a choice that will appeal to both regulars and those seeking something different.

The Tatlows also recognise that quality food will be an integral part of this established community pub. A menu of freshly prepared dishes will complement the drinks offer, making the place an attractive destination whether calling in for a pint, lunch or an evening meal.

An alternative market also features with crafty gift stalls supporting local businesses and charities along with lots of other events. See their social media for updates.

Of course, one of the pub's greatest assets is its outstanding canalside location. With views across the Coventry Canal and plenty of outdoor seating, it provides the ideal setting to enjoy a well-kept pint while watching narrowboats pass by. It is a location that perfectly captures the relaxed pace and character of Britain's canal network.

Carol, Nick and the team are looking forward to becoming part of the local community and welcoming visitors from much further afield. CAMRA members, canal users and lovers of pubs alike will no doubt wish them every success as they begin this exciting new chapter at the Samuel Barlow.

George Greenaway



Next LST
Branch
Meetings

Mon 3rd Aug, 7.30pm, Samuel Barlow, Alvecote

*There is no formal meeting in early September
see you instead at Tamworth beer festival!*

Mon 5th Oct, 7.30pm, Old Bank House, Tamworth

A Beefy Beer?



We overheard an amusingly disgusted reaction to a cask beer in one of our branch pubs. A punter took one look at the pump clip for Theakston's *Barista Stout*, and recoiled. "Yuk, how on earth could anyone drink that? Sounds bloody horrible." He quickly realised his error – he'd read it as Bisto! We don't think even Theakston's would go that far ...



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NORTH WARWICKSHIRE

Our thanks to Atherstone pub historian Rob Higgins for the photo to the right, showing a mirror which still lives at the former White Hart pub in Atherstone (now White Hart House, between the rail station and library). The pub closed way back in 1971, and the pic reveals that the place was once an Eadies pub, a Burton upon Trent brewery which was taken over by Bass in the 1930s. Rob enjoyed the rare privilege of exploring the building recently with the last landlady, now aged 88!



Since the last issue, the **Angel** in Atherstone has a new gaffer in Gary Chamberlain, already well known around the town for his printing business and other involvements in the community. It'll be steady as it goes on the ale front – Leatherbritches ales plus guests – but among the additions is a Space Invaders machine (also featuring other vintage games – we suspect at least some of our readers remember the 1980s!). Gary anticipates getting an Invaders tournament or even league going!

Just across the square, work to open up the top floor of Atherstone's **Market Tavern Tap** is still in progress. They've already had English Heritage approval, and once the final stage of council approval is granted, gaffer Leigh reckons that the actual work should progress fairly quickly. We hope to have more to report in the next issue! Meanwhile, you may wish to head along to the ale, cider and sausage festival that the pub is holding in early August (see inside-back-page listings). If the fine weather holds, then note that the market square also offers an excellent alfresco drinking area – Market Tavern to one side, Angel to the other, both with an excellent range of ales.

Just yards away, the **New Swan** is undergoing significant refurbishment work, certainly externally and maybe inside too – we haven't yet found anyone who knows what the plan for the place is. The pub has had a chequered history with cask ale, but there is surely potential there to exploit the market square's status as a real ale hotspot.

The **Kings Head** on the edge of Atherstone has new managers David and Nikki, and in a promising sign they've started listing their ales on Real Ale Finder. Check out this canal-side spot while the marvellous weather persists (or regardless if this has triggered a miserable August!). Food is also served.

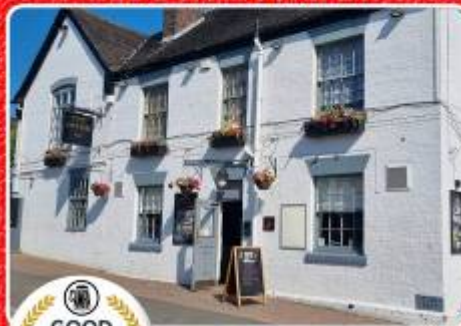
You may have missed it by the time you get a copy of the mag, but the **White Hart** at Ridge Lane is holding a sizeable music fest on the first day of August, featuring no fewer than nine sets throughout the day! Popular for its *Bass*, the place also offers two varying guests, listed on Real Ale Finder. With nice beer gardens both here and at **Church End Brewery Tap** just down the road, it's worth spending a summer afternoon/evening in the village!

The **Green Man** at Middleton has new management. It's still a Mitchell & Butlers pub with an emphasis on food, but the new team seem keen on the ale front, with regular *Bass* and a changing guest.

STAFFORDSHIRE

It was a worrying time for the **White Lion** at Harlaston after the unfortunate death of the previous publican in January, but happily the pub re-opened with new management in mid

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Tipple Tattle cont.

June. It's a valuable community local, particularly following the final disappearance of the former Black Horse in Edingale. At present the sole cask ale in the White Lion is *Pedigree*. We have heard good reports of the food served in the pub.

The Brewhouse & Kitchen chain, operating around a dozen outlets across the country, is understood to be selling some of its sites. This is on the back of a couple of years' worth of losses by the group, resulting in a statement that it would sell sites which "no longer fit its model", presumably meaning the underperforming ones. Within the branch, we've already lost the Sutton Coldfield outlet two years ago, so the big question is whether the Lichfield outlet will be affected.

WEST MIDLANDS

In a surprising and pleasing turnaround, the former Cask & Craft on Boldmere Road in Boldmere re-opened as the cleverly named **BOLDbeer Tasting Rooms** in late June. A short spell with the building being used as a dress shop seemed to spell the end of the place as a bar, but thankfully that was a wrong assumption! It remains primarily a keg craft beer bar, but does have the odd cask ale; find out current choices on Real Ale Finder. At present it's opening from 3pm Wednesday-Thursday, and from noon Friday-Sunday.

BEYOND THE BORDERS

Splendid news from Coventry where the historic **Whitefriars Olde Ale House** is set to re-open after a nearly decade-long closure. Grade II-listed and dating from the 14th century, it is being refurbished, with new tenants pledging to restore it to its former glory and bring back real ales. The opening was scheduled for the end of July, but do check before travelling to visit this ancient gem!

The beginning of July brought with it the news that brewery supremo Humphrey Smith, secretive and highly eccentric boss of Samuel Smiths, had died aged 81. One of the many strange aspects of the brewery's operation during Humphrey's reign was the number of closed pubs in their estate, with around half of the 300 reckoned to be sitting empty, many of them famously closed on a whim – swearing, tech device usage, customers posting pictures of beautiful interiors online, or simply not having Humphrey's favourite pudding. It is understood that the brewery operation will now pass into the hands of his son Samuel. Many up north are hoping that, in time, this will lead to a far more rational operation of the pub estate, and a far less imperious approach to both publicans and the public.

CAMRA discounts in Nuneaton & Bedworth :

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Warwickshire Pub of the Year



Being lost for words when you're writing for a magazine is not that useful a state. But that's almost the state that we in LST branch find ourselves in, with the stunning news that two of our branch pubs have won the overall county Pub of the Year award in their respective counties. In early July we heard the very welcome news that CAMRA's Overall Warwickshire POTY for 2026 is Atherstone's **Market Tavern Tap**, while the Overall Staffordshire POTY for 2026 is the **Tamworth Tap**. What has really taken our breath away is that this is the second year running that this has happened – these fantastic pubs won the very same accolade in 2025!

So first it was off to Atherstone in the blistering heat of a lovely Friday evening, where we used the cool of the splendid rear garden to present the award. Gaffers Leigh (holding the certificate) and Antoni (to the left of Leigh looking from the front) are joined by staff, LST branch members, and Tavern regulars. Our congratulations to both Leigh and Antoni, but also to their splendid team of staff who deliver the package.

Then along the rail line to Tamworth, where an equally lovely evening gave the opportunity for another alfresco presentation, in the fabulous setting of the Tamworth Tap's Hopyard, overlooked by the town's castle. The space was just about big enough for the jubilant crowd

Staffordshire Pub of the Year



of regulars and branch members! Owners Louise and George Greenway are pictured in the centre with their certificate. It's stunning to note that this is the sixth year in seven (with a break during Covid) that the Tamworth Tap has taken this particular award, a testament to the hard work that George Louise and their large, dedicated team of staff put into the pub.

The top rankings for Warwickshire and Staffordshire, plus the other two counties which make up the CAMRA West Midlands region, Shropshire and the metropolitan West Midlands, are shown in the tables to the left. The four winners from the counties will now go on to the next level of the competition, for the West Midlands regional crown – with the winner of that level then going on to have a shot at the National top spot. So who are we in LST branch now rooting for in this next level? We want 'the Tap' to win of course – though what goes in front of Tap is up to you!

County breakdown ...

Warwickshire

- 1 Market Tavern, Atherstone
- 2 Old Post Office, Warwick
- 3 Windmill Inn, Rugby

Shropshire

- 1 Prince of Wales, Shrewsbury
- 2 Pheasant Inn, Wellington
- 3 No placing

Staffordshire

- 1 Tamworth Tap, Tamworth
- 2 Night Inn, Uttoxeter
- 3 Old Bush, Wombourne

West Midlands

- 1 Robin Hood, Amblecote
- 2 Vine, Wednesfield
- 3 Broomfield Tavern, Coventry

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The Big Beer Badlands

CAMRA have released an excellent campaigning document, *Beer in the UK*; find it at camra.org.uk/beer-report. It's a report well worth reading if you're interested in the current state of British beer and brewing, and more importantly, its future.

Among other things, the report highlights how global brewers dominate the UK beer market, with over 80% of UK beer produced by international corporations; how small independent brewers are routinely excluded from the market by the near-monopolistic practices of these same corporations; how it is their normal practice to mislead consumers about what they are drinking and where it comes from (Beavertown is not some cosy independent but operated by Heineken; Madri may be promoted as the “soul of Madrid” but was designed, and is brewed, in Tadcaster).

The report contains a number of recommendations, primarily calling for an investigation into these dodgy practices by the Competition & Markets authority, and a review of the levels of alcohol duty.

Edited by beer guru Tim Webb, this is an absorbing read which manages to be both concerning and optimistic. Download it today and gain enlightenment!



Just A Minute?

Here at *Last Orders*, we're all for accuracy, but we'd suggest that you can take it a little too far. This certainly looks to be the case with CAMRA's pub finder website, which helpfully tells you how long you've got before the selected pub closes. Fair to say though that quoting times in minutes to 13 decimal places is a little over the top! That's not far from the accuracy of atomic clocks, which measure to something like 18 decimal places in a minute – equivalent to not gaining or losing as much as one second in 300 million years. But don't worry – if you want to exploit the precision offered by the pub finder website, then you no longer need a room-sized atomic clock; they are now available at microchip scale. This should help you not to miss last orders!



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The Good, The Bad And The Excellent

The Good, the Bad and the Excellent - or ale you need to know about beer scoring. Since 1974, CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide* has been the 'bible' for finding pubs serving the very best cask ale across the country. But have you ever wondered how the pubs are chosen for the *Guide*?

It's simple really. The process is guided by tens of thousands of CAMRA members, who rate their beers using CAMRA's online scoring system. To find out more use the link:

camra.org.uk/beer-scoring

To help identify potential *Guide* pubs, CAMRA members score their pints whenever they have the opportunity. Their scores help local branches determine candidates for the *Guide*, and these can change year on year because the standards are high. Serving live cask beer requires skill in the cellar and attention by bar staff all the time. Competition for a place is stiff because only 4,500 pubs make it into the *Guide* each year.

Beers are scored – or more correctly, rated – using the scale below. The scale is essentially a numerical 0 to 5, but is expressed in the terms below, to give scorers a clearer picture of what their score should mean.

Rating	Description	Your reaction
Excellent	Exceptional and clear (if intended to be) with fantastic aromas, flavours and ideal carbonation.	Superb! You tell your friends and compliment the cellar manager.
Very good	Satisfying and well-kept with a great appearance, good carbonation and enticing aromas and flavours.	You consider having another and may cancel plans to move to another pub.
Good	Nice appearance, good carbonation, aromas and flavour.	Pleasant but not memorable. You're happy to have another but might consider something else.
Acceptable	Unremarkable and ordinary, with no noteworthy characteristics.	You're unlikely to have another unless it is all there is and there isn't another pub to go to.
Poor	Noticeably imperfect.	Drinkable with resentment, but you politely ask for a replacement.
Undrinkable	Unpleasant to drink, likely with a disgusting taste, incorrect appearance and off/foul aroma.	You politely ask for it to be replaced and consider asking the publican to take it off.

Ratings can be recorded on CAMRA's online pub guide camra.org.uk/pubs by all CAMRA members so start rating your beer now. Scoring not only assists local branches in making their *Good Beer Guide* selections, but it also drives a beer quality rating for each pub, with a one-to-three pint glass rating:   

And if you're not a CAMRA member but would like to rate your beers then why not join? Head over to camra.org.uk/membership.

John Rowling



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THE Italian Job



If your idea of good old British cinema perfection – or simply a nostalgic comfort watch – involves three Mini Coopers tearing around Turin with bootfuls of stolen gold, then there is good news. If you visit modern-day Turin, nearly 60 years on, you can revisit virtually every filming location in the city and find them almost unchanged. From the weir which they race across (above) to the church steps that they career down, it's all there, almost like using a time machine to 1969. The arcades, galleries, marble staircases, even the roof top racetrack and the gang's chapel-cum-palace hideout, can all be easily visited.

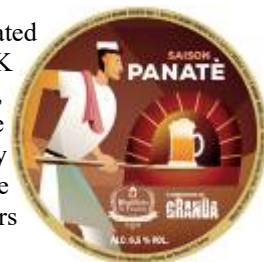
It'll take you at least a couple of days to do it properly. And the good news is that there is also an excellent craft beer scene to occupy your evenings, including some surprisingly good cask beer! Let's look at some of the highlights ...



On the western edge of town, **Dogana Torino** has ten beers on tap, two of which are through the prominent handpulls, left. Cask ale quality overseas can sometimes be a lottery, particularly in countries where it is not native – i.e. everywhere outside the UK! But all the cask I go on to try in Turin is easily to a UK standard. Here the Birra dell' Eremo *Supersonic* is a nicely roasty dark mild, while La Granda *Comfort Snack*, a 5.7% pastry stout, has splendid crème brûlée overtones. Good temperature and carbonation in both, but even the keg offerings here are decent in this regard – not icy and over-fizzy.

Nearby, the tiny **Le Birre del Carlino** offers only four beers (and filler-boots peanuts-in-shell to drive your thirst), but even here one is on handpull. A thoughtful selection of styles – a pale, black, IPA, and a bitter on handpump, all Italian, and if you try all four, you only get charged for three!

Also nearby, the **Birrificio La Piazza** is a brewpub, nicely decorated with artwork which has a distinctly retro feel to it, a bit like the UK rail posters of old. They have a wide range of their own beers on tap, though it's all keg here. That said, the two I try are spot on. The 6.5% *Panaté Saison*, right, is lemony with a splendid rustic-musty edge to it, while the *Winternacht* Baltic porter doesn't have the warmly alcoholic kick that you might expect at 8%, but the flavours are great – coffee, chocolate and a nice hint of molasses.



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The Italian Job cont.

Certainly not there when the Italian Job was filmed is **Open Baladin Torino**, looking (right) more like a big greenhouse abandoned in the centre of town. It's one of a number of pubs across Italy run by the Baladin brewery. A wide range of Baladin beers are offered, as well as a few guests. One of the more interesting Baladin beers is *Garden*, a smoked beer which is not too extreme but has a pleasing phenolic smokiness.



Also offering a smoked beer is the **Birrificcio Torino** brewpub, left, a rather more traditional-looking place. Ten house beers are on offer from the large brewery which sits behind the bar. The *Due Due* is a splendid 2,2% session IPA, done in hazy style which presumably helps the flavour levels. *La Drôla* also sticks out, a hazy wit-style beer at 4.2%; it's far more hoppy than is normal for wit beers (they usually rely on the spicing), but it works really well. The *Decima* rauchbier is also compulsory, gentle but unmistakably a smoked beer.



Birrificcio San Paolo is another brewpub which is well worth a visit. It's a single room place on the edge of town, far enough out of the centre to feel like a community local. The gaffer-brewer likes to enthuse about his beer, with justification. They're all keg but have the carbonation and temperature of UK cask ale. There are eight beers on draught; probably the most notable were *Juniperus*, a 'gin IPA' (with botanicals rather than actual gin!) and *Cocoa*, a cocoa stout with a dry rather than sweet chocolate flavour.

Doppio Malto Torino is one of a nationwide chain of bars, which nevertheless offer an excellent choice of beers. This outlet sits in an industrial building reinvented as a food mall. There are 16 beers of all hues and styles, including two 1.2% offerings. Just looking for example at the black end of the spectrum, both the black stout and imperial black IPA are first class. You'll generally get the same choices wherever you find an outlet in Italy, but they're still worth seeking out.



The strangely-named '**skjuma**' has eight draught beers, but they make a feature of their two handpulls, so it was compulsory to give those a go. Undead *Draugr* was described as a 'Norwegian best bitter' (hard to believe best bitter is a concept that your average Norwegian would recognize) but it worked as a nice punchy bitter, while 100Venti *Sex Porter* wasn't exactly sexy but certainly a nice roasty porter.

Final honourable mention has to go to **DOT Birreria Indipendente**, which certainly makes a feature of weird and wonderful beers. Sadly, the lone gleaming handpull was unused, but the keg choices compensated. A dozen tap beers included the 6% Hilltop *Bambelg*, an impressive blend of beer cultures given that it was a Belgian rauchbier – smoky meets estery candy sugar sweet! Most impressive though was Boia *Executio* #5, a cocoa and apricot imperial pastry stout at 9% which stops you in your tracks. Gorgeous full-on chocolate with loads of plummy, prune flavours hiding behind. *Magnifica!*



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For The Last Time ...

It's the end of an era. Saturday 24th October will see the 40th National Breweriana Auction, but sadly it will be the very last national one, so don't miss it! For its final outing, the event returns to Burton upon Trent Town Hall, close to the rail station. Whether you are a dedicated collector or merely interested, it's an enjoyable event, with the prospect of sampling the many excellent pubs of Burton afterwards!

Around 150 interesting items will go under the hammer (well not literally of course); everything from mirrors to trays; advertising signs to water jugs and bottles; books and pump clips. There will also be a number of stands selling brewery memorabilia, adding to the atmosphere in this wonderful Victorian venue.

There are all sorts of items from all over the country to decorate your home. What about a flagon from Wadworths? Based in Devizes, they were founded in 1875 and remarkably are still owned and run by the descendants of John Smith Bartholomew, the co-founder of the brewery.

A limited-edition commemorative Millennium Ale set has an unopened bottle, glass and bottle opener in a lovely metal container. This is from Mansfield Brewery, who first started brewing in 1855, taken over by Wolverhampton and Dudley in 1999 and closed in 2002.



There are numerous items that you can either use, or more likely display. A tray from Bass is joined by a number of lots from Worthington including an ashtray (well used!), a match holder and the famous Worthington Mayor jug, left. These two Burton breweries were founded in the mid/late 1700s, with Worthington 16 years older. By the late 1800s, Bass was the biggest brewery in the world and merged with Worthington in 1927. Bass sold the brand to Coors (now Molson Coors) in 2002. Maybe their best known brand was Worthington *White Shield*, an iconic British-style IPA, which ceased production in 2023 but you can still buy it in Norway and the Netherlands! Included in the lots is an unusual display card advising customers to order their final bottle at last orders "to allow for the care necessary in pouring the last rush of orders for Worthington *White Shield*".

These are just a few of the items on sale, each with a history to tell. You don't have to be an expert to attend the National Breweriana Auction. The auction is great fun to take part in (or even just to watch) and it's an opportunity to get some great bargains, plus many of the items on sale can appreciate in value. And, of course, like any CAMRA event, there is some good beer on sale all day (from a local brewery).

The doors open at 10.30am with the opportunity to view the lots and browse the breweriana stands that will also be there. Bidding starts at noon and is normally finished by 3pm, giving a chance to have a final perusal of the stands before visiting some of Burton's iconic pubs and heading home. Entrance is by catalogue (£3.00), available on the day, or in advance by post (£6.15, first class) via <https://tckty.camra.org.uk/e/559/>. If you can't get there, postal bids are accepted, just contact Bill Austin on 07831 688276 or baustin1951@btinternet.com. The venue is wheelchair accessible. For more details, see www.gandc.camra.org.uk.



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The LST branch pubs listed here kindly offer real ale discounts to CAMRA members. We offer them our thanks. Show them your support and get the most out of your membership! For further info on the pubs, consult WhatPub



Offering a discount in your pub, or know of one that does? Let us know at LST.Camra@gmail.com and we'll mention it here.

Acorn, Lichfield	50p CAMRA vouchers
Andys' Brew House, Streetly	30p/pint, 15p/half
Angel, Lichfield	20p/pint, 10p/half
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Tamworth Tap, Tamworth	20p/pint, 10p/half
Turnpike, Lichfield	10% off
Whippet Inn, Lichfield	50p/pint, 25p/half
White Horse, Curdworth	20p/pint
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Local Festival Diary



Festivals with a **bold heading** are CAMRA festivals, where entrance is free to CAMRA members. Why not join? See page 28 or go to camra.org.uk/join

6-9th August, Market Tavern Ale, Sausage & Cider Fest
 Market Tavern Tap, 21 Market Street, Atherstone, CV9 1ET
 20+ ales, 20 sausage flavours, plus real ciders.

20-23rd August, Lord Nelson Beer Festival
 Lord Nelson Inn, Ansley, Nuneaton, CV10 9PQ. From noon each day.
 Around 16 ales, 4 ciders. Food throughout. Live music & BBQ Fri & Sat.

25-29th August, 47th Peterborough Beer Festival
 The Embankment, PE1 1EF. Tue 5.30-11, Wed-Sat 12-11.
 Hundreds of real ales plus ciders, spirits, wines, bottled bar, food, live music.

4-5th September, 33rd Harbury Beer Festival
 Harbury Village Hall, South Parade, CV33 9JE
 Ales from Warwickshire & Leicestershire plus a selection of ciders/perries. Fri & Sat 11-11.

10-12th September, 32nd Tamworth Beer Festival
 Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Corporation Street, B79 7DN
 75+ ales plus ciders and perries. Thu/Fri 11-11, Sat 11-10. Hot & cold food.

23-26th September, 34th Shrewsbury Beer Festival
 St Mary's Church, St Mary's Street, SY1 1DX
 Around 100 ales plus ciders. Wed-Fri 11-10.30, Sat 11-9.

24-26th September, Leicester Samaritans Beer & Cider Festival
 Royal British Legion, 4A Wigston Road, Oadby, LE2 5QA
 26 ales, 5 ciders. 12-11 each day. Snacks, live music each evening.

25-26th September, Hinckley Beer Festival
 Hinckley Rugby Club, Leicester Rd, LE10 3DR
 Around 70 ales & ciders. Fri & Sat 12-10.30.

30th September-3rd October, 39th Brunswick October Beer Fest
 Brunswick Inn, 1 Railway Terrace, Derby, DE1 2RU
 50+ ales, 20+ ciders/perries. Normal opening hours.

7-10th October, Nottingham Robin Hood Beer & Cider Festival
 Trent Bridge Cricket Ground, West Bridgford, NG2 6AG
 500+ ales, 100+ ciders/perries. Wed 1-7, Thu-Sat 12-10.30.

Holding a beer festival? Let us know and we will advertise the event here free of charge.
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