



Mad About Beer

MARCH 2023



BEER FESTIVAL LATEST

It's nearly festival time!

Not long to go now, the Maldon beer festival opens its doors on Tuesday 25 April at 12noon, running through to 11pm on Saturday 29 April. We will have up to 60 beers and 15 ciders on offer, this will include beers from our local brewers as well as some from further afield.

Inside this newsletter, we will hear more about our chosen charity, Farleigh Hospice, and we will take a look back to the first ever Maldon festival.

We also have an interview with the (relatively) new head brewer at Mighty Oak, hear about the recent Chappell beer festival, and find out what future social events are planned for our branch. And hear what impact the recent Budget might have on our pubs and clubs.

You can also find out the winner of our branch Pub of the Year.

And finally, we'll also take an unusual look at some of our local pubs and one of our historic breweries.

We look forward to seeing you at the Maldon festival!



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN - THE FIRST MALDON BEER FESTIVAL

As reported in the Evening Gazette in April 2003, that first Maldon beer festival went down a treat! Here's their full report from that historic day.

The three-day event, put on by (Maldon &) Dengie CAMRA, was more successful than anticipated and has set the ball rolling for future events in the town.

The festival kicked off at the town hall, on Market Hill, on Thursday, along with Maldon District's Shakespeare Festival, which marks the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare and (the visit of) his company to the town in 1603. It started off with 40 beers on offer, including Shakespeare-themed beers from local brewers Mighty Oak. But 16 extra had to be drafted in to cope with demand, and by Saturday afternoon there were only 20 left for thirsty visitors to choose from.

Charles Murray, chairman of the organising committee, said they had brought in the equivalent of 1,000 extra pints. "It has been very successful and we are really pleased. There have been lots of positive comments. I met somebody who has lived in Heybridge for 30 years and said this is the best thing the council has done!"

He added a lot of local residents had come to sup the beer. One man travelled all the way from Bristol to taste three beers and went home again. Mr Murray said: "We are asking if we can come back again for the same week next year."

And the rest, as they say, is history, as we welcome back the Maldon beer festival for its 18th time.

LATEST ON THE FESTIVAL

The festival opens at 12noon on Tuesday 25 April. Admission to the festival will be free for CAMRA members—but please remember to bring your CAMRA membership cards with you! Admission will be £1 for non CAMRA members and there is a £4 charge for the festival glass, which is fully refundable. We will be holding our branch social at the festival, in two sessions; 12noon to 1pm on the opening day, and between 5.30 and 6.30pm on the Thursday, which is of course our Hat Day. Please come and join your fellow MAD branch members and enjoy a free half pint on us! You can collect your token from the membership stall. And if you are coming on Hat Day, don't forget your crowns or tiaras!

We are also holding our first ever trade day for publicans and brewers at the Maldon festival. This will also take place on the opening day, between 12noon and 4pm. All trade visitors can enjoy a free half pint with us, again, just bring your invitation with you and come and collect your token from the membership stall.



ABOUT FARLEIGH HOSPICE

In our previous newsletter, we introduced Farleigh Hospice and outlined the care services they provide.



For over 40 years, Farleigh has been providing hospice care, free of charge, to people affected by life-limiting illnesses and bereavement across mid Essex. Our inpatient unit provides care and support to patients with complex care needs. This can include symptom control, psychological support and rehabilitation to build confidence as well as respite care and more intensive support at the end of their lives.

MALDON PREMISES SET TO OFFER GREATER CHOICE AND ACCESSIBILITY LOCALLY

We purchased our new Maldon building back in January 2020 and then, sadly, the pandemic hit stopping our plans for redevelopment to a new Hospice Care Centre in the Dengie area. However, we quickly utilised the building – despite it needing a lot of work – and our South locality care team have been based there since.

Three years on, we are now delighted to be able to share our exciting plans with for the building's refurbishment which will enable all the services that we currently offer at the main Farleigh Hospice building in Chelmsford to be accessed in Maldon, with the exception of the Inpatient service. This will create a much-needed hub and greater choice for the local community to access our hospice care and bereavement services.

The building will consist of several multifunctional and flexible spaces including work space, private consultation space, group meeting space, quiet space, access to information area and a lovely public café. It will remain home to the South Locality Care Team too.



The team consists of multi-disciplinary professionals that provide a holistic hospice service. There will be a strong focus on supporting patients receiving palliative care to live well, with the opportunity to access a wide range of consultative and therapeutic services from the hospice building, or in their own home, wherever is their preferred choice.

The hub will also provide a further base for our bereavement services that reach out to those bereaved within our community. The building has been designed as a lantern in the local community and it is envisioned that the building itself will become a local community hub.

- **The large hall will provide opportunities for different community groups to meet or to hold exhibitions, staff conferences or education/ training events.**
- **The café will provide a place for those using our services, our supporters and the wider public to meet socially together for coffee and a chat.**

We hope our supporters and those who use our services in the Maldon and Dengie area will be excited about the development of the Maldon premises as we are. We will be keeping you updated on our progress every step of the way. If you would like to make a donation to the Maldon premises refurbishment project, please visit: [farleighhospice.org/donate](https://www.farleighhospice.org/donate) and mention Maldon in the reason for donating or contact our team on **01245 457300**.



FARLEIGH HOSPICE FUNDRAISING

Walk for Life - Sunday 14th May 2023



Our popular Walk for Life, along the towpath of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, returns this Spring. There are two scenic routes to choose from: 12km starting at Paper Mill Lock between 9.30am and 11.30am and 24km starting at Heybridge Basin between 8.30am and 10.30am. Both walks finish at the Teledyne e2v offices in Waterhouse Lane, Chelmsford.

This family-friendly event is suitable for keen walkers of all ages - who will each receive a finisher's medal – and well behaved dogs are welcome too! Adults will be given a Farleigh t-shirt and children get a wildlife card to complete as they walk.

We hope you can join us on this rural ramble! To find out more and book your place, visit farleighhospice.org/walk



PUB UPDATES

The Sunny Sailor last month went to auction, however it did not meet its reserve price. So it is now up for sale once again in Dedman Gray's auction for £400k. This is a significant drop in price, so there is now hope that a sale will be secured.

The Green Man Little Braxted has new owners, and they have announced they are having a beer festival over the weekend of Friday 28 to Sunday 30 April. We wish them every success.



The Yard in Maldon High Street is hosting a Launch Party on Saturday 25th March from 7 pm. The popular micropub is having a makeover, with a new name, logo and signage. Locals are being invited to become "Friends of The Yard" and provide crowdfunding to ensure that their pub continues to thrive in these tough times.



MEET THE BREWER—INTERVIEW WITH ABAYOMI ADEYOYIN

HEAD BREWER AT MIGHTY OAK BREWERY

Quick Bio

Born – 1976 in Lagos, Nigeria

Married – to Maureen for 20 years

Children – 4 children (2 boys and 2 girls), aged from 11 to 19

Lives – Colchester

Qualifications – Chemistry Graduate from Lagos University

Career – Various positions within Heineken Brewery, Lagos. (post-University)

Head Brewer at Mighty Oak – 2022 to date.

I met Abayomi within the welcoming confines of his office at the Mighty Oak brewery. Abayomi is an amiable, friendly, articulate fellow who has clearly settled in at Mighty Oak and has a clear vision for the future. He sees his team as a happy family and enjoys working with them.

He started out as a Shift Brewer with Heineken soon after leaving University. Fortunately for Abayomi, Heineken were actively recruiting graduates. Clearly Abayomi has a penchant for working at Breweries situated next to redundant railway lines as he tells me that the Heineken Brewery in Lagos had one which went straight through the site, although no longer in use. It had been used to deliver to and from the brewery in times past.

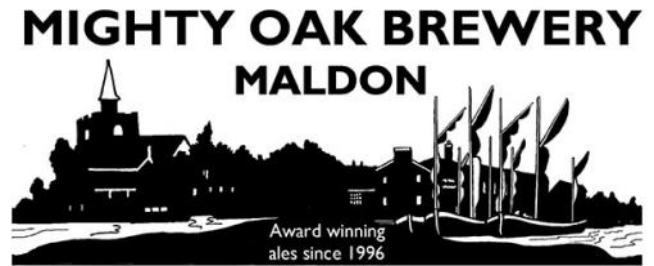
His career took off and he found himself promoted to a range of roles within the brewery over the coming years. These included Brewery Trainer, Quality Assurance Manager, Lead Brewer, Supplier Engagement (basically a contract manager) and a Materials Buyer. Ultimately, he became a Business Partner in the brewery and a Personnel Manager.



He gained a Diploma of Brewing in 2005 from the UK by studying remotely. Being heavily involved in procurement for the brewery, he became a Member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (MCIPS). He can rightly claim to be a “brewing businessman” with an excellent end-to-end knowledge of the brewing business.

His family moved to the UK in 2020. His wife (with children) moved to Colchester first to study for a Master's Degree in Special Education. Abayomi followed a year later. He looked for job opportunities locally and found that Mighty Oak was recruiting a new Head Brewer.

Abayomi recognises that one cannot just be a brewer in isolation. He enjoys meeting and talking to other brewing professionals and knows the key to developing a business is continuous innovation. He doesn't feel that leaving a massive multi-national like Heineken and joining relative minnow Mighty Oak is a backward step. On the contrary, he sees this as giving him more freedom to innovate and de-



With his background largely in lager brewing, he is thinking about experimenting with brews made from a lager malt. He doesn't think this will impact the taste of our favourite local brews too much, although they may be slightly sweeter. Any new brews will be subject to extensive trials and sampling. Some ale/lager blends may be developed, initially via the Mighty Oak system of monthly specials. He also intends to trial the use of different hops for aromatic impact and flavour. He feels some hops may have health benefits which haven't been fully explored. He also recognises that he must think more about new and younger markets, palettes and tastes. Ideally, he wants to keep a foot in both camps; lovers of traditional beers and those who seek out and enjoy new flavours. Ultimately, he wants to review all existing recipes and ingredients.

He is very keen on the people side of the business. He is trying to build and motivate the brewing team (currently 3, but soon to become 4). He wants to promote work/life balance and other concepts of good person management. He himself misses brewing whenever he's away from it. He's very keen to start getting more involved with those monthly special recipes in the coming months, so I hope we start to see the results of his labours as time goes on.

He welcomes customer feedback and tries to take it into account. Ultimately, he hopes that some monthly specials will make regular appearances at our pubs and bars.

In his personal life, he enjoys playing football. And he enjoys nothing more than sitting down with the children and watching a good film with loads of popcorn. Abayomi is a sociable and friendly guy who was an absolute pleasure to meet and interview. He is keen to become more engaged and involved with CAMRA locally so I hope we may start seeing him as a guest at some of our local meetings and social events soon. He is keen to do so, so we should all make the effort to welcome him into our midst.

Mark Ellis

BLO Mighty Oak



CHAPPELL BEER FESTIVAL



A welcome return to a popular beer festival, this takes place at the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappell/Wakes Colne in deep-est Essex. The museum is situated between Colchester and Sudbury and hosts two festivals, this being the Winter one. Funds raised from the festival go towards help the running of the museum and CAMRA.



The main venue is the goods shed, which becomes a festival hub for three days. You can also sit in old rail carriages with your beer. In Summer, there are plenty of tables available and more seats available in converted wagons. There is lots of rail memorabilia around the site and the museum is open throughout the year, with special events and steam days to take you back to the great days of rail.

Here is a selection of photos from the festival. All aboard please!



FUTURE SOCIAL DATES

We are aiming at having a full calendar of events for our branch, with alternative branch meetings and social events. Our next social event will take place during the Maldon beer festival, more information on this is included in that section of the newsletter.

After the festival, we have a date booked for the Hurdlemakers Arms beer festival. The pub, located in Woodham Mortimer, has held an annual festival for a number of years, and they are opening a day earlier than usual for us to hold our June social there, on Thursday 29 June. We will also be having a branch day at the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF), this runs from 1 to 5 August, the date of the social has yet to be decided on. Further events will follow and dates and destinations will be included in future newsletters and on the branch website, so please look out for more information. We hope you can join us at these events and share a pint or two with us.



A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

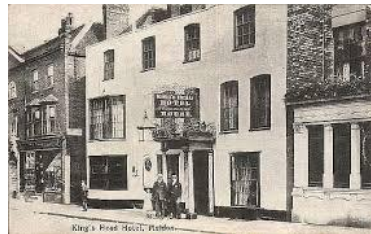
A change from our previous newsletters, rather than a look at the pubs we have lost, this time we take a different view of some of our branch pubs, not through the lens of a modern camera (or mobile phone, take your pick!). With the odd historic brewery for good measure.



We start with an oil painting, from roughly the 1930s, of the Jolly Sailor in Maldon. We also see two views of the (most recently) Sunny Sailor, also in Maldon. Though this time with a drawing from the mid 19th Century and a photo of a bomb removal during the Second World War (the pub is in the background).



Our next blast from the past is the Railway Hotel, Cold Norton, now of course a community owned pub called the Norton, and the location for our January branch meeting.



We then move onto Burnham on Crouch, starting with the Oyster Smack and then the White Hart. Our next stop is the Swan Hotel, of course this is the location for our beer festival! And then we see the King's Head, back in the days when it was still a pub.



Maldon also had its own brewery, part of the Gray & Sons business from 1896. The brewery was located on Gate Street and is believed to have been brewing at the start of the 19th century, only ceasing in 1952.

And finally we take a look at the Cricketers in Bradwell on Sea. No cars to worry about in these images of course – well may be just the odd one! And we close as always by saying cheers!

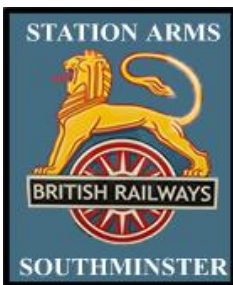


ANNOUNCING OUR BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR (POTY) FOR 2023

This year, we decided to follow the recommended advice from CAMRA and use the scoring criteria employed to judge the regional and supra-regional competitions. We asked you, the members, to go out and assess the four highest-rated pubs in our area in terms of beer scoring on NBSS during 2022. A total of ten members took part, going individually to look at the four pubs and allocating scores to various elements such as beer quality, cleanliness, community focus and the welcome they received. The competition closed on Monday 13 March.



Several publicans taking part remarked that it was good to have people visiting their pubs and sampling beers during the course of the competition, which lasted five weeks. So, without keeping you in suspense any much longer, here is the result!



In first place was the Station Arms in Southminster with an average score of 87.9. In second place was the Queen's Head in Burnham-on-Crouch with a score of 87.4. Third was THE Queen Victoria in Maldon with 87.0 and the Hurdlemakers Arms came fourth with 85.3. Although it was a very close competition, the Station Arms has been judged Maldon & Dengie CAMRA Pub of the Year for the third year in a row!



Hearty congratulations are due to Martin Park for this well-deserved accolade. The Station Arms is a classic village pub, with a great range of real ales always available and a warm welcome.

TWO MORE MALDON & DENGIE BRANCH PUB AWARDS ANNOUNCED



The **Hurdlemakers Arms** in Woodham Mortimer has been given the Branch Rural Pub of the Year award for 2023. This highly popular village local, with its reputation for serving high quality real ales and excellent home-cooked food, is a worthy winner. Congratulations go to Garry and Nettie Pilcher – well done!

The **Cap and Feathers** in Tillingham has been given the Branch's Most Improved Pub award for 2023. This is not an award we make every year, but we felt it was important to recognise the sterling work undertaken by Sean Cole since he took over as the licensee of this historic pub. There are always well-kept ales available and plenty of events taking place in this community local.



WHAT THE RECENT BUDGET MEANS FOR OUR PUBS

The extension of the government's Draught Relief initiative was the main news for pubs and breweries at the spring budget, with many other hospitality concerns, including energy contracts and business rates, left unmentioned.



Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt extended the Draught Relief from 5% to 9.2%, meaning the duty on an average draught pint of beer served in a pub or bar does not increase from August and will be up to 11p lower than the duty in supermarkets. The disparity between the two sectors in VAT paid on food was not addressed.

The commitment to duty on a pub pint being lower than the supermarket was called the "Brexit Pubs Guarantee" by the Chancellor.

"The cut to draught duty as part of the alcohol duty reform is positive and we hope that it will result in a boost for our pubs this summer," said Emma McClarkin, chief executive of the British Beer & Pub Association.

"However, the fact is our industry will be facing an overall tax hike, not a reduction, come August. Duty on non-draught beer will rise and the measures introduced today won't rebalance the catastrophic impact soaring inflation and unfair energy contracts are having on both pubs and the breweries that supply them.



"As 1 April rapidly approaches, businesses are also nervously awaiting what's next for their energy costs, and a lack of support in today's announcement will have a direct impact on their ability to keep their lights on and doors open. We need the chancellor to unlock growth opportunities for businesses of all shapes and sizes. We look forward to seeing how his measures on investment, people and skills will lay the foundations to allow our pubs and breweries to continue to create jobs and help regenerate local economies in every part of the country.

"The chancellor highlighted how our pubs are the most treasured community institution, and we appreciate his efforts to provide some relief, but a lack of immediate support in today's budget will still put the future of many of them at risk."

What does this all mean for pubs (and breweries) in our area? Well, testing times lie ahead and some of our pubs might struggle to survive when energy costs rise after April. It makes it even more important that we get out and support them by using as many of our local pubs as we can over the coming months.



AND WHAT DOES THE BUDGET MEAN FOR THE PUB LANDLORD?

With the announcement this week from Jeremy Hunt's budget that from August the duty on a draft pint will be 11 pence lower, which is welcome news, but not far enough to stop the inevitable tide of super-market pricing pulling many pub goers to drink at home. Many breweries and Pub Companies have already increased their prices to publicans. Some have done this a couple of times as costs have increased across the board, from wages to utility costs it remains to be seen whether this 11 pence reduction will be passed on, or what is more likely, that the breweries, who have had a very difficult Winter trade in places, retain any saving to bolster already depleted reserves.

Prices for pints have gone up with margins being squeezed more and more, making the on-trade very difficult in the current climate. Many publicans hope that the Big Three, St Patrick's Day, The Six Nations Finale, and Mother's Day, bring lots of people out to the pubs and clubs, and that the Spring/Summer season, which brings lots of visitors and tourists into the branch, will start now, ahead of the Easter holidays.

There are some key issues that you can help support, such as calling for a reduction of VAT to 10% for hospitality businesses, click to sign and Petition Parliament (<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/625741/signatures/new>) and write to your MP.

For information on CAMRA's current campaigns, please go to the CAMRA campaigns page (<https://camra.org.uk/beer-and-cider/campaigns/>).

BEER SCORING

CAMRA member?
Please score your beer

Scoring your beer helps to:

- monitor beer quality in pubs
- identify pubs for the Good Beer Guide

1. **No cash beer available**

2. **Poor.** Beer that is anything but passable, drinkable or enjoyable with considerable reservations

3. **Average.** Competently brewed, drinkable beer but doesn't impress in any way, not worth making to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing

4. **Good.** Good beer in good form. You may prefer to go to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again

5. **Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition

6. **Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A subsequent drinker will award this score very rarely

Score your beer today at WhatPub.com or use the Good Beer Guide app.

Download the app today by visiting camra.org.uk/gbgapp

The branch Pub of the Year results are reported earlier in this newsletter. The key part of the POTY process is the scoring of beers whenever you visit one of our branch pubs or clubs. We are introducing a new way of submitting your scores. You will soon see these scoring boxes appearing, these can be used to score the beers you are drinking whenever you are



out and about. Please look out for them. If the pub or club you are visiting doesn't have one of these, please get in touch with us. You will still be able to use the What Pub app to submit your scores, or go online, using the National

Beer Scoring System (NBSS).

