



Mad About Beer

JULY 2023

SOUTH OF THE BORDER - DOWN WOODHAM FERRERS WAY

It's that time of the year again. The 11th South Woodham Ferrers beer festival, being held at the Village Hall, a short walk from the train station and bus stops.

The festival is running the same hours as it has previously, with the festival opening, slightly earlier than in the past, at 2pm on Thursday 5th October, then from 12noon to 11pm on Friday and Saturday. There will be 36 ales and 10 ciders to choose from, as well as a range of bottled beers and soft drinks. Food will also be available. The village hall bar will be open alongside the festival.

The cost of admission will be free for CAMRA members and £1 for non-members. Festival glasses will be available for a refundable deposit of £4. We will again be using beer tokens for bar sales.



As usual, the event will be staffed by volunteers, and we will be asking people to come forward to help deliver the festival. Watch out for the initial email which will be sent out in the next few days. If you've never volunteered at a beer festival before, why not come along and join the fun? You are ensured of a great time and you will meet lots of interesting people!

The festival charity this year is the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Their lifeboat crews protect hundreds of communities around the UK and Ireland through their 24 hour search and rescue service. They rely on the safest, most reliable lifeboats and modern stations to launch from.

There are around 450 lifeboats and around 240 stations around the country, staffed by over 5600 operational crew. Our nearest station is in Burnham on Crouch, home to several pubs within our branch. We will hear more about the RNLI in our festival programme.



PUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The **Station Arms** in Southminster is celebrating a unique hat-trick of successes in the 2023 CAMRA Maldon & Dengie Branch Pub of the Year competition. It was judged by local CAMRA members to be the best pub in the area for the quality of its real ales, ambience, and customer service. The **Queen's Head** in Burnham was judged to be the runner-up this year. There are almost 80 pubs serving real ale in the area, so it is a real accolade for local pubs to win these awards.

The awards were made recently by James Burrell-Cook, Chairman of Maldon & Dengie CAMRA on a visit to both pubs. Martin Park, landlord of the Station Arms said after receiving the Pub of the Year award: "I'm really pleased to be named Pub of the Year for the third year running; it is a very special night for the pub." James Burrell-Cook added, "this is a well-deserved award for Martin and the Station Arms. The pub always serves a great choice of beers, and it is a very friendly and welcoming local." Martin took over as landlord of the Station Arms in 1992, and the pub has featured in every edition of CAMRA's "Good Beer Guide" since then.



Jon Hollis took over as landlord of the Queen's Head in Burnham in January 2022, and has worked hard since then to revitalise the pub. He has refurbished the interior and now serves an ever-changing selection of beers, many of which are not often seen in our area. On receiving the Runner-Up award in the Pub of the Year competition, Jon said: "Being a new landlord I am honoured to be recognised for my efforts in keeping a good cellar. To come so close to winning is such a pleasant shock. It's great that other people appreciate my efforts and take time to vote for my lovely little pub. You have made my year." In presenting the Runner-Up award, James Burrell-Cook said, "Jon has befittingly won this award, and it is testament to his hard work that the Queen's Head came so close to being Pub of the Year in his first full year

in charge."

The **Hurdlemakers Arms** in Woodham Mortimer recently held its hugely popular annual beer festival. During the event, the Maldon & Dengie Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) presented licensees Gary and Nettie Pilcher with their "Rural Pub of the Year" award for 2023. This honour was in recognition of the very high quality and selection of fine ales served at the historic country pub, as judged by real ale drinkers from the area and further afield.

James Burrell-Cook, MAD Branch Chairman, said at the presentation, "this award to the Hurdlemakers Arms is very well deserved. For many years now, Gary and Nettie have served consistently good beers and ciders. It's also a real community local and has a great reputation for its home-cooked food."



PUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nettie Pilcher replied, “we are so happy to have won this award for the second year running. We value CAMRA’s support and thank everyone who voted for us. Also, a big thank you to our amazing staff for all their hard work throughout the year”.

The Hurdlemakers Arms is in the heart of the Essex countryside a few miles from Maldon and boasts a big garden and children’s play area. It is popular with locals and walkers and has a barn suitable for private functions, as well as a marquee during summer months.



A local pub which has previously won the CAMRA National Pub of the Year award (back in 1998) is on the way back. The **Cap and Feathers** in Tillingham was voted Maldon & Dengie CAMRA’s “Most Improved Pub” for 2023 by local real ale lovers. This beautiful 15th-century weather-boarded pub has undergone a recent transformation since Sean and Helen Cole took over as licensees. They are serving a well-kept selection of beers and their Sunday roasts are proving to be very popular. The pub also hosts regular events, such as live music and charity fundraising music bingo nights.

Landlady Helen Cole, on receiving the award recently from Maldon & Dengie CAMRA Chairman, James Burrell-Cook, said: “We are very privileged to receive this award. We want to thank our family, customers and staff for their continued support. We couldn’t do this without them.” James Burrell-Cook replied: “This award isn’t one we make every year, but we were really impressed by the hard work Sean and Helen have put in since taking over the reins to enhance this lovely village pub.”

Our branch Pub of the Year (POTY) awards are based on the scores submitted by branch members of the beers they have sampled over the year at each of the pubs in our area. The more scores our members submit, the better. All these scores are reflected in a final shortlist of pubs, from which we ask our member to visit each shortlisted pub and allocate scores based on criteria used by CAMRA for regional and national awards.

There are various ways you can score the beers you are drinking and submit them. You can read more about this elsewhere in this newsletter. We are trying to provide as many ways as possible for branch members to submit their scores, and to visit as many of our local pubs as possible over the year.

Apart from the POTY selection process, the scores submitted by members also help decide which pubs will appear in the Good Beer Guide (GBG). Each branch has a number of places in the Guide and all the scores submitted go towards the final selection of pubs.



PUB NEWS

Blue Boar, Maldon under new ownership

The historic town centre hotel and pub has recently been purchased by James Sinclair, the Essex entrepreneur, who runs the Partyman Group. He also owns Marsh Farm in South Woodham Ferrers and Rossi's ice cream in Southend. He recently said that he was "really proud and feels really privileged to have it. You never really own something like that, you just have it for the next generation." He has lots of ideas for the "Blue Boar"; our Chair, James Burrell-Cook, met with the new owner after the purchase and can confirm that the pub side of the business will remain, and in time will be fully refurbished.



Closed Pub in Bradwell to be subject of Asset of Community Value application



The "Cricketers" in Bradwell closed its doors in March, when the couple who were running it retired. Local people in the village were very disappointed when the sudden closure happened; Bob Cook, who lives in the village, recently decided that he would seek support from his neighbours to apply to Maldon District Council for Asset of Community Value (ACV) status for the pub. Bob sought advice from us on how he should go about this. We have provided him with a template to follow for the application and have offered other support as well.

If the application is successful, restrictions are placed by the Council on the owner if they try to sell the pub. The restrictions stop the owner from selling for a period of six weeks to allow for a community group to say whether they wish to buy it. If they do, the group has six months to organise their finances - during that time the owner cannot sell to anyone other than a community group. After the six-month period, the owner can sell to whomever s/he chooses. We will continue to monitor developments. Bob is hopeful that he has the local parish council on side, which would certainly strengthen the case for an ACV listing.



The same family has taken over the "185 Bar" in Maldon High Street (formerly known as the "Warwick"). This has been converted into a restaurant called "HAUS", which will serve a British tapas menu. This is now understood to be open to the public.



PUB NEWS

Maldon's "Muddy Duck"

Big changes are afoot at the historic riverside pub at the bottom of Market Hill in Fullbridge, Maldon. Historically, this was known as the "Welcome Sailor", but in recent times it was renamed the "Sunny Sailor". Following its recent sale, it has been rechristened the "Muddy Duck".

Steve Jenkin and Julian Hoad are the new licensees; they have ambitious plans for the pub, including a complete refurbishment (with new kitchens), and an exciting food menu. They currently have two real ales on draught, but plan to expand the selection as the business develops.



Queen's Head, Burnham to host beer festival

Jon Hollis, the landlord of the Queen's Head in Burnham (which finished runner-up in our Pub of the Year competition), will be holding a beer festival over the August bank holiday weekend. This is always a popular event, which will coincide with Burnham Week, the town's annual sailing regatta.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS?

One of our local beers, Mighty Oak's Captain Bob, triumphed in the East Anglian Area Competition, so has gone forward for judging for the Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB) this year. The final outcome is announced at GBBF on trade day, so we wish them the very best of luck.



While on one of our local breweries, Mighty Oak may soon be in for a toe curling time. Or rather a Toe Wrestling time! As they are the sponsors of the World Championships, which take place at Ashbourne in Derbyshire on 19 August. Unfortunately we are not running a social visit as a branch, but you can make your own way there to witness this test of strength, endurance and, well, toes.

The brewery has produced an accompanying beer, "Toe Wrestler", a 4.5% golden ale containing amarillo, comet and columbus hops, but fortunately no toes! They also have several specials on the way, including the aptly named for Maldon "Mudlarking".



POINTS OF ORDER

Feedback on the key issues from our recent branch meeting on 24 July.

Constitution



Our branch constitution is starting to show its age, and the committee have been reworking it so it complies with the model branch constitution provided by CAMRA HQ. The new version is currently with HQ and once they are happy, it will need to be brought to branch for approval. To do so, an Extraordinary General Meeting (AGM) will be held.

Whilst the constitution is unlikely to appear on the best seller list any time soon, this is a necessary step for our branch - rather like that trip to the dentists you've been putting off! Copies of the new constitution will be available at the September branch meeting.

Room at the Top - a Message from Our Chairman

As we look towards the summer and some fun events and as mentioned in the minutes of the recent branch meeting, I would like to invite those of you who would like to take on the role of Chair of the Maldon and Dengie CAMRA Branch to send in their nomination to stand via email or in writing, this can be sent via email to:

secretary@maldonanddengie.camra.org.uk



or in writing to Chair Maldon & Dengie CAMRA, c/o The Queen Victoria, Spital Road, Maldon, Essex, CM96ED.

I am stepping down from the role to focus not only on running the Queen Victoria, a new planned extension and my work as a Maldon town councillor and chair of the Maldon District T23 Tourism Group. I hope to remain on the committee to support the technical side of the SharePoint which we would like to roll out to all the members of the branch in 2024.

We are just awaiting dates of the EGM and AGM for November along with Septembers Branch Meeting and these will be published separately along with our Branch Christmas Meal location and Menu!

It really has been a privilege to work as Chair for the branch and with the new website, SharePoint and scoring boxes being rolled out across the branch a lot of work has taken place behind the scenes and I am truly thankful to the committee and other members for their hard work, time, campaigning and volunteering.

South Woodham Ferrers beer festival is around the corner and we are really looking forward to the festival with some exciting new suppliers of cask ale from across the country.



IT'S SUMMERTIME! WHEN THE WEATHER IS FINE!

Ok may be not that fine, the Manchester test match being a good example! But the days are long and hopefully with some blue skies, so here are some things you could be doing over the coming month.



GBBF

It's August so time for the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF), which takes place as usual at Olympia in London. We are making a visit there on trade day, Tuesday 1 August. If you would like to join us, please do, but you will need a trade day ticket to get in! We are meeting at Platform 1 (not 13 3/4!) at Stratford Station to catch the 10.20 to Olympia.



Maldon Beer Festival Volunteers BBQ

As a thank you to all our Maldon beer festival volunteers, Gary and Nettie are hosting a barbecue at the Hurdlemakers Arms on Sunday 13 August. The fun starts at 2pm with the BBQ starting at 4pm. Tickets for the BBQ are £15 each. The event is open



to all branch members and not just our amazing volunteers. If you would like to attend, please contact us via this email address:

chair@maldonanddengie.camra.org.uk

Further details will follow once we have an idea of numbers likely to attend.

Branch Pub Walk: Three Dengie Pubs - Saturday 19 August



The very first MAD CAMRA pub walk took place way back in the summer of 2012 – was it really 11 years ago? Well, we thought it was about time we repeated the inaugural 6½-mile ramble.

The walk takes in some lovely Dengie countryside around the villages of Stow Maries, Purleigh and Cold Norton. It also provides time for brief stops along the way at the Bell and the Norton for refreshments, finishing at the Prince of Wales for a late



lunch (before 3 pm). We can be sure of a warm welcome and some fine ales in all these great pubs.



Three Dengie Pubs Walk

The meeting time at the Prince of Wales will be 10:30 am. Could you please let us know by **Wednesday 9th August at the latest** if you wish to take part in the walk and join us for lunch. We will then send out the lunch menu for you to make your choices beforehand. Hope to see you on the walk!

If you would to join us, please contact us via email to:

pubs@maldonanddengie.camra.org.uk



WHAT'S COMING OUR WAY

Continuing the theme of future events, here are some more ideas that might interest you.

Wibblers August Bank Holiday

The brewery will be hosting their traditional August Bank Holiday beer festival on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There will be 30 real ales, a hog roast, live music, a kids area, and brewery tours. Entry is free.

Maldon Beer Festival 2024

The festival will be back next year! After a very successful 2023 festival, planning has already started. We are looking at different venues, including the Cygnet Rooms which housed us earlier this year. The festival is likely to take place during the school Easter holidays.



SCORES ON THE DOORS

The next time you head to a pub for a beer or two, take a minute to ponder on how your experience can not only help future visitors, but also contribute towards selecting the best pubs in the area. All the scores submitted by branch members count towards the selection of the Pub of the Year, a much coveted award, and reported elsewhere in this newsletter.

How do you score your beers? The National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is based on a points system. You can find more information on this at their website here, but in brief, this is how it works.

<https://camra.org.uk/take-action/national-beer-scoring-system/>

0. No cask ale available.
1. *Poor*. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable.
2. *Average*. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way.
3. *Good*. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub.
4. *Very Good*. Excellent beer in excellent condition.
5. *Perfect*. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. So why move to another pub?

You can submit half point scores if you can't make your mind up!

We have tried to make it as easy as possible for you to score the beer you drink. You can submit your scores on line through the WhatPub website (<https://whatpub.com>), or you should find our new scoring boxes in the pub you are visiting (see photo). But we are also providing you with some scoring sheets that you can take with you, fill in, and send back to us WHO/WHERE? If you turn this page, you will find some blank scoring sheets, simply print the page and you have your sheet! You will also be able to find the scoring sheet on our website.

Remember, all the scores you submit go towards selecting our Branch Pub of the Year, and our entries in the Good Beer Guide.



On the next page, you can find the score sheets you will see in the scoring boxes we have delivered to every pub. Feel free to print these off and use them, especially if the box isn't visible in the pubs you visit! But please let us know as we would like to find out which pubs don't have these readily accessible.



NBSS SCORECARD

NBSS Scorecard

How to Score the Beer:

- 0. No cask ale available.
- 1. Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
- 2. Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
- 3. Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.
- 4. Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.
- 5. Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

Name of Beer and Comments:	Beer Score					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Beer: <i>e.g. Adnams Ghost Ship</i> (To score 3.5 write in box)				✓ 3.5		
Comments: <i>e.g. a decent pint of beer</i>						
Beer No 1:						
Comments:						
Beer No 2:						
Comments:						
Beer No 3:						
Comments:						
Beer No 4:						
Comments:						

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Comments:						
Beer No 4:						
Comments:						

