

FREE

Inn Touch

Rugby & District Branch

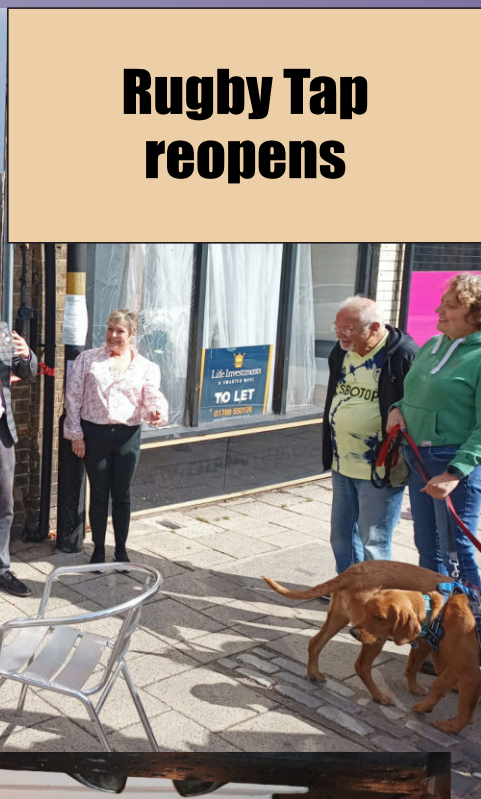


Campaign
for
Real Ale

Autumn 2024



Rugby Tap reopens



Admiral Nelson Country Pub of the Year (CPOTY)



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About Inn Touch

Inn Touch is the self-published magazine of the Rugby and District branch of CAMRA. It has a print run of 2000 copies and is distributed by branch members to over 100 pubs in the local area.

If you are visiting, and enjoying a pint in the Rugby area, all the content you read here in Inn Touch is geographically relevant.

Views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual authors and not necessarily supported by CAMRA.

Right: at my local The George



In this edition of Inn Touch, the Admiral Nelson is awarded Rugby & District CAMRA Branch's Country Pub of the Year 2023 (CPOTY). This great pub has one of the most picturesque canal-side settings you can find anywhere. Further good news, regarding another pub in a beautiful setting, the Coach House at Ashby St Ledgers is being taken over by Freespirit pubs. It promises a brighter future.

In past editions of Inn Touch I've posted pictures of myself enjoying real ale around the globe; namely the Canaries, Madeira and as far afield as St

Lucia. However, this time, I'm pictured five minutes from my front door at my local: the George in Bilton. It's a friendly haunt with a good selection of changing ales, and reasonably priced. I'm fortunate to live in Bilton as both The George and Black Horse offer a discount on real ale to CAMRA members.

Elsewhere in the town centre, it is heartwarming to see the Rugby Tap opening up again. Real ale served straight from the cask to the glass; you can't get more 'CAMRA' than that. And at the recently reopened Crown, a few of us practically toppled off our bar stools when finding real ale- for many the first time in living memory.

Our area abounds with music, quizzes and other pub entertainment. These are collated on the rear page by day of the week for easy look up.

I'd like to close by raising a glass to Malcolm Harding, a long term CAMRA member and active branch member, who died recently. You can read an obituary to him overpage.

Steve - editor

editor@rugby.camra.org.uk

www.camra.org/join

Be part of the CAMRA story

Real ale is just the start...

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everything from pubs and
drinkers rights, to licensees
and breweries, uniting us
in the story we all love.

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Nov 7th - Cocktail night
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21st - Aspire quiz / curry night
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We are now taking bookings
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Christmas meal with us

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Festive Menu

Our Festive Menu is
perfect for works
Christmas parties or a
festive get together with
family or friends

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Malcolm Harding



It is with great sadness that we have to announce the sudden death of Malcolm Harding. Malcolm was a member of the Rugby branch, but also was once employed by CAMRA as their chief finance officer at the St Albans HQ.

Malcolm was a lovely bloke, who was extremely knowledgeable and respected across the CAMRA world. He always had time for people and was always kind and courteous. A true gentleman. Tributes have been pouring in

from those who knew him. Over the years he did everything to support the cause of real ale, from ordering the beers for the Great British Beer Festival to helping start the Merchants in town. Malcolm was very proud of the fact that he had a CAMRA membership number of 3. His work was rewarded recently when he was awarded the prestigious CAMRA Campaigner of the Year award.

Outside his work with CAMRA, Malcolm was a huge football fan. He was a season ticket holder at Spurs, but also liked watching any game no matter what size. It was appropriate that his last game was watching his beloved Tottenham play Coventry in the Carabao Cup. He was also a man of great faith, who helped run Bible classes and a member of Coventry and District chess league.

Sue, his wife of over 40 years, has said, "Some people when they go leave a hole. Malcolm has left a massive crater." This is certainly true. He last joined the branch on the night of the Country Pub of the Year award at the Nelson. Little did we know that would be last time we had the pleasure of his company. Malcolm leaves his wife Sue and children Rachel and Andy. Our love goes out to them at this difficult time.

Richard Potter
Rugby CAMRA branch chairman

Celebrating 25 YEARS OF



The Raglan Arms

50 Dunchurch Road, Rugby,
Warwickshire, CV22 6AD

10 hand pump real ales
&
2 real ciders.



The Windmill

1 North Street, Rugby,
Warwickshire, CV21 2AB

12 hand pump real ales
&
3 real ciders.



The Lawford Arms

13 Main Street, Long Lawford,
Warwickshire, CV23 9AY

4 hand pump real ales
&
2 real ciders.



Great beer,
proudly brewed in the
Black Country.

The Windmill new licencees



Rugby CAMRA would like to welcome new Licencees at The Windmill in North Street.

Gemma and Andy Barber have been the new Licencees since late August. It is their first venture into the Pub trade after both being in retail before. Andy is a Yorkshire man who has a passion for Leeds United. Gemma is from Banbury in Oxfordshire and they have resided in Rugby for 8 years. They had been thinking about running a pub for a while

after doing bar and cellar work at the Raglan Arms, and jumped at the chance when the Windmill became available.

Plans for events at the Windmill include darts knockout on Sundays monthly and live music every fortnight on a Sunday approximately 4 pm to 6 pm.

There will also be quiz nights the last Tuesday of the month.

November 1st to 3rd they are holding the pub's first beer

festival where all of the hand pumps will be in operation. They are hoping to feature 20+ beers over the weekend plus a choice of traditional ciders.

The pub itself is an old coaching inn which has been tastefully restored by the owners Black Country Ales. It has a pleasant courtyard drinking area at the rear and ample seating inside. Bar snacks available are hot and cold filled cobs and soups. The beer range is Black Country Ales' own beers plus up to 8 guest

beers from a wide selection of brewers.

Also available are 4 ciders and a gluten-free beer.

Opening times are 12pm till 11 pm Monday to Thursday and Sunday, and 12pm till 12am Friday and Saturday.

Rugby CAMRA would like to wish Gemma and Andy all the best in their new venture at the Windmill in the future.

Steve Durrant

Paddox returns to former glory

It's Saturday the 28th of September at 2.30 in the afternoon and I am making my fourth or fifth visit to the Paddox since it reopened. I've eaten in there twice, visited on one of our last cycle rides of the season and called in when walking my dog. I hadn't got round to chatting with the licensee about the pub though.

It was opened for the August bank holiday weekend by Amy Holden and Darren Guy from the Rose & Crown at Wolston. They were asked by Star Taverns to open the pub until a permanent landlord takes charge. They have done a great job at bringing life back into this

community local. Regulars are thrilled to have a real pub back again.

The place was packed at 2.30pm. Some people were dining, there were lads propping up the bar and

an 18th birthday event was just commencing in the corner. It was a joy to behold. Three hand pumps are serving Wye Valley Butty Bach and HPA and they are joined by

Timothy Taylor's Marmalade Best. The latter will change over time, but buy it now as 20 pence from every pint goes towards the homeless charity the Marmalade Trust.

It's another excellent renovation by Star Taverns. They are really pouring money into the local pub scene. Well done to them. Pool, darts, sport on the TVs and food are available every day. Hopefully Sunday lunches will be

served soon.

It's great to see the Paddox back to its best again. Rugby CAMRA wishes them all the best in the future.

Richard



Above: Amy Holden from the Rose and Crown

Country Pub of the Year

Admiral Nelson - Braunston



Right: chairman Richard with Pete and Dave from the Admiral Nelson

From the earliest days of Rugby CAMRA's existence there has been a Pub of the Year award. A chance to recognise a great pub in the area and voted by all CAMRA members within the Rugby district. This pub then goes on to be judged within Warwickshire district then the region and ultimately National Pub of the Year. Country Pub of the Year runs a little differently. It was created, again many years ago, when it became clear that typically the POTY award was almost always going to pubs in Rugby town as that was where most members would frequent. The Country Pub of the Year was

created to give the branch an opportunity to recognise some of the great country pubs we have in the district and this year's recipient I am delighted to say is the Admiral Nelson at Braunston, a personal favourite of mine.

The CPOTY has to be just that- a country pub. Rugby town pubs are not eligible. It should typify all that is great about a country pub. Nice setting, good food, great garden and, of course, great beer. This the Admiral has in abundance. It's located down by the canal locks at the end of Dark Lane. There's ample outdoor

seating next to the canal and it's a truly idyllic place to enjoy a pint or something to eat on a sunny day. Inside is a cosy pub with plenty of seating for diners and also an area to enjoy a drink on comfy seating. On the night we visited there were 5 real ales available: Tiger and Old Original are on permanently and three other beers from Everards too. They get beers from Brunswick as of last night and had Triple Hop available. I tried the the Sunchaser and the Triple Hop and both were in excellent condition.

The Business owner/tenant is Pete Hawksworth from Sheffield and his pub manager is Dave Greatorex. They took over the business 6 years ago and met working for Barracuda Bars and worked at the Priory in Banbury together. Pete mainly concerns himself with the kitchen and other duties in the background.

Dave is front of house. There has been an 18% increase in food sales year on year and a 12% wet sales increase. They reckon 5-10% trade is canal based. Dogs and horses are welcome. They also have horse parking area - that's a first I think for the area! Both were delighted to win the award.

To be honest this is a pub that has struggled in the past, located where it is. But it really is worth the effort of taking a trip here. Looking at Pete and Dave's continued success in increasing trade I am pleased to see I can look forward to visiting it many more times in the future. Congratulations from all at Rugby CAMRA!

Stu Caldwell



The Olde Coach House

Press
release

We are so pleased to finally announce that Freespirit pubs is coming to Ashby St. Ledgers this autumn! The local area is as charming as it comes - this picturesque, chocolate-box village is situated just five miles from Daventry and not far from the lovely village of Long Buckby. Ashby St. Ledgers is home to The Olde Coach House Inn, a sixteen-bedroom property equipped with an extensive dining area and traditional bar space. It also boasts a large beer garden which

is perfectly suited to events, large gatherings - or just a cold beer in the sunshine! Freespirit pubs has just recently completed the deal on this characterful site, making it the sixth addition to the Freespirit family. The team plan to start work on a fresh redesign to get the site open before December, with planned pop-up events to get to know local residents and guests.

Freespirit pubs

Crown Goes Real

The Crown in Market Place in the centre of Rugby is selling real ale for the first time in living memory. This follows a £253 thousand pound investment by Star Taverns, which are owned by Heineken. They have done a

flooring, upgraded lighting and just about everything else is new too. It now looks like a proper pub rather than the karaoke bar it once was. There are renovations that I particularly like. There is now visible a row of stained glass windows depicting crowns either side of the front door. They were revealed after decades of being hidden. There is also a large stained glass crown window at the rear of the pub. I also like the newly etched front windows, denoting 'Crown circa 1900'.

Manager and manageress Joe Wild and Charmayne Kessna are delighted with the renovations and are looking forward to the autumn and winter period. Joe, a keen beer fan, is keeping an excellent pint and recently took part in Cask Ale Week. He is introducing guest beers and would like to stock a dark beer soon.

It's great to see the Crown go real in this wonderful transformation of the pub. Rugby CAMRA wish it all the best in the future.



Above: Crown manager Joe Wild

fine job on this once bedraggled hostelry. It was once a long standing bastion of fizz, but now it boasts three hand pumps selling beers like Proper Job, Greene King IPA and Timothy Taylor's Marmalade Best.

What a difference has been made to the interior. It has been fitted out with a new bar, smart new

Richard

Rugby Tap reopens

Front page: the mayor of Rugby, Simon Ward, at the reopening ceremony

The Rugby Tap has reopened after a seven month hiatus. Sarah Quinton and her team have worked tirelessly to get Rugby's independent micropub off the ground, after the tragic deaths of barman Ken and owner Mike.

Sarah wants to thank the Tap family, who raised £6,600 in a crowdfunding campaign. Many of the regulars donated to the cause. She also wants to say thank you to her husband Gary for all his hard work and support and Matt from Oslo Brewing for setting up accounts and ordering the beer.

Below: Richard with Sarah Quinton of the Rugby Tap

Their work is evident when you enter, as the whole place has been revamped. They have added

some new comfy settees and light shades in the new royal blue surroundings. The signage is back as are smiling photos of Ken, Mike and Jasper the dog. On the bar, four new beer lines have been added. These include Oslo Brewing's Cloudberry Lager and cider from Napton. The real ales are still served on gravity from the likes of Phipps, Oakham, Byatts and the new Napton Brewery. There is also a fine selection of canned beers in the fridge from places like Arbor, Shiny, Deya and Left Handed Giant.

Sarah is going to reintroduce music back to the Tap and the occasional Sunday afternoon quiz. There are also going to be Takeaway Tuesdays: bring your favourite take out food into the Tap and they will provide the plates and cutlery.

It is wonderful to see the Tap reopen. There are new elements, but it still has its familiar welcoming feel. Its reopening also gave Rugby CAMRA the opportunity to finally award them their third place certificate in last year's Pub of the Year competition. Good luck to Sarah and all her team in this most welcome reopening.

Richard



Regular local pub entertainment

Subject to change. Please check with the host's website or social media for more detail.

Monday

Quiz night

Black Horse, Bilton
Green Man, Dunchurch
Real Ale Classroom, Lutterworth
Merchants (last in month)

Music / Other

Newbold Crown - Open Mic
(every other)



Tuesday

Quiz night / Other

The Bear
Waterside, Hillmorton
Raglan - Board Games Club

Wednesday

Quiz night

George, Bilton
Royal Oak, Crick
White Hart, South Kilworth
(every other)

Music

Squirrel Inn - open mic

Thursday

Quiz night

Town & County Club
(last in month)
Admiral Nelson, Braunston
Friendly Inn, Frankton
(last in month)
Raglan (alt. Thursdays)
Victoria Inn

Save the White Lion - Pailton
Village Hall (monthly)

Music

Town & County Club - jam session
(1st & 3rd in month)
Quigleys - live music
Knightley Arms, Yelvertoft - folk
(2nd in month)

Bingo

Royal Oak, Crick

Friday

Music

Quigleys - live music
Prince of Wales - karaoke

Saturday

Music

Quigleys - traditional Irish music
Prince of Wales - live music
Squirrel Inn - live music

Sunday

Quiz night

Red Lion, Crick (last in month)
Red Lion, Kilsby (last in month)
William Webb Ellis

Music

Squirrel (most Sundays)
Prince of Wales - karaoke



For forthcoming local CAMRA
events, see branch diary at:

www.rugby.camra.org.uk/diary
