

Minutes of the CAMRA in Gloucester
Annual General Meeting
8pm Wednesday 1st October 2014
Fountain Inn, Gloucester

Apologies

Trevor Miles

Chairperson Report

It seems incredible that it is just over a year since I was elected Chair of CAMRA in Gloucester. A lot seems to have happened in that time, not least the contribution to the County debate about the future of Cheltenham. Well that is resolved now, and we now have two Branches in the County, Cheltenham is one, and Gloucestershire of which we remain a part, is the other.

During the year I have had excellent support from my committee, who work hard behind the scenes to make CAMRA in Gloucester happen. The website I think is one of the best in CAMRA, so do visit it if you haven't already. Thank you Mike, and to Ruth, who has a hard task to keep me on track at meetings. Ali has the unenviable task of trying to keep information about the pubs up to date, and the general committee members, Owen, Theo and Darrel, who turn up at the meetings with their views, ideas and moral support. Neil and Caz have put together an excellent programme over the last year, and have some really interesting ideas for next year. Finally I need to thank Steve, who puts up with me on a daily basis, and supports everything I need to do to fulfil the role of Chair.

Gloucester once again ran a very successful beer and cider festival at Blackfriars, so much so that we will be doing it all over again next April, 17th and 18th. Once again this could not be done without people volunteering, and I thank them for their contribution. If you feel you could help next year, we are always on the look out for help, whether it be in the planning stages, or turning up on the day to pull a few pints.

Although an item on the agenda later, we introduced the idea of Pub of the Season, which is voted for by the members, particularly as a way of recommendation to other members to try out a particular pub, which may have changed or just may be worthy of giving them a bit of publicity. Winners have been The King Edward VII, The Fountain Inn, and most recently the Englands Glory. One of our dilemmas is the Pub of the Year, and how we identify it. We currently have a City Pub and a Rural or Country Pub of the Year. These were The Pelican and the Golden Heart at Nettleton Bottom respectively, but we can only put one of them forward, which was the Pelican, for our CAMRA in Gloucester pub of the year which is then judged against the other sub branch pubs for the Branch Pub of the Year. Later we will discuss how the members would like to see this dealt with in the future. One thing is clear, the Landlords/ladies really appreciate the recognition for their pubs and the efforts both they and their staff have put in.

Our social programme has been interesting and varied, and we will have a separate report on this. Some members are regular attendees, where others can only get to one or two because of timing or areas of interest. It would be good to see more attend, as not only does this reflect an active membership, an aim of CAMRA, but it supports our pubs and brewers, and even more importantly, we all enjoy a good time out and have fun.

More recently we have reintroduced the News, Views and Events, because members told us that they missed it, even if it was only to provide easy access to our events list.

Finally, please do take the opportunity to give feedback to any member of the Committee on any aspects of what we do in Gloucester. We can only know if we are doing a good or bad job if people tell us! I know on a personal level it can be quite demoralising when there is little or no response to requests for feedback, information, or help. Fortunately some of you do, and it does make a difference.

Social Secretary Report

“What a social twelve months we have had. We have had numerous day trips out by train, taken over plenty of Stagecoach services buses, visited a good proportion of Gloucester CAMRA pubs and had the odd mini bus / coach trip thrown in for good measure!

It started slowly, with Four going every-so-slightly-mad in Stroud, but from there we built upon it with a legendary day trip to Bristol travelling by both train and boat! We quickly learnt to keep a loose itinerary as pubs were crow-barred in from all angles by our extremely keen beer-monsters! That time we were lucky enough to escape the Beer-muda Triangle unscathed!

We hit Bespoke Brewery Tap en-mass to enjoy their wide range of beers on draught and almost remembered to be quiet at the bus stop on our return (shhhh!). There were numerous beer festivals in the City that had to be tested - The Pelican, The Fountain, Wetherspoons and the Blues Festival - oh did I forget to mention Gloucester CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival - I think a few folk may have popped by?!

With the help of the wonderful Stroud RE Group we were able to take a coach full of thirsty people to both Pauntley Real Ale Festival and the Cotswold Beer Festival to try their wares. These have proved to be a great success, so look out for more collaboration trips in future!

The walk around Worcester served up a number of new and different pubs, as did Chepstow - a place where few had been drinking before. Look out for the upcoming away day to Bath - a city new to us, so perhaps expect some new and different watering holes.

Over the next twelve months we hope to offer up a similar agenda of bus, rail and minibus trips with a balance between those that you have to commit to, and those that you can join us on the day for - we hope to see the same faces and maybe some new ones too - please do come and join us on a trip - they're good fun, and I promise we don't bite!”

Beer Festival Report

The 2nd Gloucester Beer Festival held at again at Blackfriars was a huge success with over 2000 people attending, 50 new people joining CAMRA and it managed to make a profit. The feedback has been amazingly supportive and the enthusiasm to hold another festival next year has been great.

The decision has been made to repeat the event but with a change to how the committee will be structured. For 2015 it will be a very small core committee with a larger number of helpers brought in as needed, it is hoped that this will streamline the decision making processes.

Sub Branch objectives

The sub branch currently has 6 objectives and the meeting discussed whether these are still valid aims.

Aim 3: to maintain a record of all pubs in the GL1 – 4, and to ensure that the Real Ale in Gloucestershire database is accurately amended.

Aim 5: to campaign to increase CAMRA membership in GL1 – 4. We aim to recruit landlords of real ale pubs

Suggested amendments:

Aim 3: To maintain a record of all pubs in the GL1 – 4, and to endeavour to keep What Pubs data base accurately updated.

Aim 5: To campaign to increase CAMRA membership in GL1 – 4 and aim to encourage a more active membership.

It was agreed that this could be discussed in more detail at the next committee meeting.

Pub of the Year and Pubs of the Season

The sub branch has received some feedback from landlords who have been recognised by pub of the season and they are delighted to receive these awards as recognition for the work they are doing in serving real ale.

Work needs to be done to encourage more members to vote for their pub of the season and various suggestions were put forward such as having beer mats printed to remind people to vote and having business cards displayed in pubs to tell members how they can vote. It was also suggested that the Chairpersons monthly update was used to promote the voting process.

Feedback from Members

It was suggested that protecting assets of community value become an aim of the sub branch and it was agreed that this should be discussed as part of updating all the aims.

Election of Officers

Chairperson: Margaret Wilkins

Secretary: Ruth Webb

Webmaster: Mike Webb

Pubs Officer: Ali Turner

Social Secretary: Neil Richardson and Caz Plaister

Clubs Officer: Trevor Miles

General Members: Steve Wilkins, Theo Bennett, Darrel Kirby

AOB

Margaret reminded everyone present that the AGM for Gloucestershire CAMRA was being held on 22nd October 2015 at The Fountain Inn and gave those present a copy of the letter from Andrew Frape.