

RACS

(The Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth)

We were founded in 1995 and are affiliated to the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood (SPBW).

The purpose of **RACS** is to enjoy good beer, visit breweries and beer festivals and be companionable over a glass of decent ale.

It costs £5 a year to join (AGM in May—see below). Meetings are monthly - usually the last Wednesday of the month.

We have a free - almost monthly! - magazine about the exploits of members and Club activities. Generally, it is distributed by e-mail for those who are computer literate, but we can always provide printed copies on request.

In the past we have had trips to Ostend, Bruges, Brussels, Lille, and nearer home pub crawls round Cornwall, Great Yarmouth, Cambridge, Ramsgate and Whitstable.

We regularly attend beer festivals at Chelmsford, Ascot (which includes a full day's racing), Ridgewell, St. Albans and Ware. The favourite is always the CAMRA Chappel Beer Festival held in the sidings of Earl's Colne station in early September. Sup your choice from 400+ beers in a railway carriage (or cattle truck!) and wait for the hog roast to be ready. An outing not to be missed.

Come and enjoy the fun. We hope to meet you soon.

*Rumour has it that another Real Ale Club has recently appeared in Sawbridgeworth. Remember **RACS** is THE original and long-established group.*

Don't be fooled — or accept second best!

RACS 2013 AGM

will be held in

The Old Bell, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth
at 8.00pm on Wednesday May 29th.

Subscriptions — £5 per person for a year — will be due.

As usual Jan will provide one of her famous Raffles.

Any nominations for Committee places should be with
Caroline or Jan by May 14th



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RACS

**The Magazine of the
Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth**



Affiliated to SPBW

APPLICATION FORM for MEMBERSHIP of
The Real Ale Club of SAWBRIDGEWORTH
to May 2013

If you wish to join or renew Membership of **RACS**, please fill in this form, in BLOCK CAPITALS, then send to JAN MEAD, 23, Crofters, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 0DE and INCLUDE a subscription of £5 per person per year*.

NAME:.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....

.....

COUNTY:..... POST CODE:.....

CONTACT NUMBER, please:

Telephone or mobile.....

or fax or e-mail.....

SIGNATURE:.....

Date.....



SPBW 50th Anniversary National
Weekend 2013

I am now taking bookings for the National Weekend 2013. This will be over the weekend of Friday November 1st – Sunday 3rd 2013. We aim to base ourselves in Derby which is an excellent drinking city.

Friday November 1st

Visit to Marston's Brewery in Burton at 7pm. – Fine traditional large brewery using the famous Burton Union fermentation system which employs rows of wooden casks.

Cost £7.50 excluding food (including 3 x ½ pint). However we will add food on to this – choice from menu. We need 20+ for hot food, so I would suggest the **assorted sandwiches** – pork pie, sausage rolls and plain crisps - with chips (£6.50)

Marston's PLC. The Brewery, Shobnall Road, Burton Upon Trent, DE14 2BG.

We would travel to Burton from Derby by train and aim to visit Burton pubs before the trip.

Saturday November 2nd

Visit to Derventio brewery at 12.00 – cost £12 including tasting. Trip & food –additional beers £3.00 a pint. - Long Mill, Darley Abbey Mills, Darley Abbey, Derby. DE22 1DZ. Fine microbrewery.

We would hire a coach to travel from Derby (bus station) and visit Derbyshire Peak district/Countryside pubs after the trip.

Sunday November 3rd

Large crawl of Derby city centre. We will be spoilt for choice as there are actually so many good pubs, that it won't be possible to do them all. Many of them have such a wide range of beers that you could justifiably spend the whole day just in a few.

Monday November 4th

Suggest returnees break up their journey by visiting Leicester.

To book your places please send £30 deposit (cheques payable to SPBW) to
John Rooth 20A, Station Parade, Northolt Road, HARROW,
Middlesex HA2 8HB OR
e-mail for information: john.rooth@gfk.com
(£4 excess will be put towards coach hire –rest collectable on the day)

YOUR RACS COMMITTEE 2012-2013



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Chair
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RUFF RICHARDS
Mascot



SPENCER RICHARDS
Vice-Chair



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ANN DODKIN
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KEITH CAVES
Treasurer



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HANNAH GADMAN
Trip Secretary



DEB EATON JOHN TRIMMER
Merchandising Officers



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Thursday March 7th 2013
A Trip to The White Hart,
Stebbing, Essex

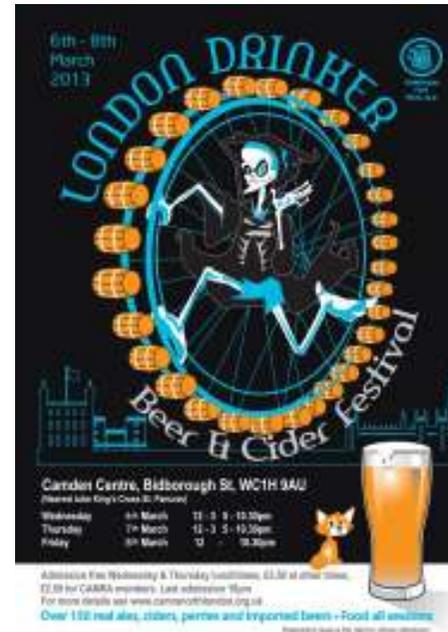
Eight members of RACS joined an evening outing with BMADS, which was efficiently organised by Tony. We set off soon after seven, following dark twisty lanes, to visit The White Hart at Stebbing.

The pub has a microbrewery and is a five-barrel plant which has been in production for about five years. Beer is usually brewed for the pub — but occasionally barrels are brewed for beer festivals or as a special commission. The beers vary between 3.5%ABV and 4.5%ABV, and are Hart IPA, New Hart and several seasonal ales. The plant was not in production on the night we went because a pump was faulty, but several good pints of beer were still available.

The pub was cosy with a real log fire burning brightly and there was a contented buzz from the customers. We were made very welcome and during the evening provided with a good, varied selection of pub snacks.

An enjoyable evening was had by all and many thanks to Tony for inviting us.

A Visit to
THE LONDON DRINKER
BEER FESTIVAL
on March 6th 2013



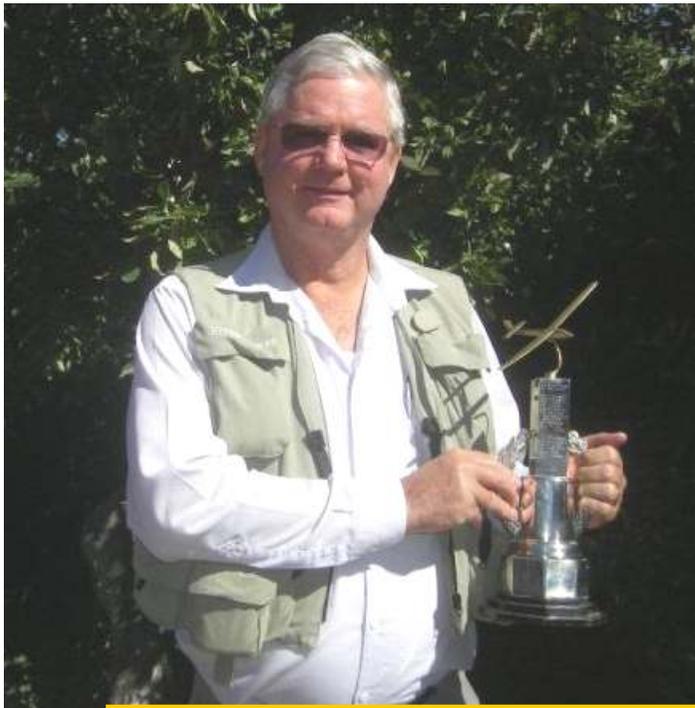
RACS made a lunchtime excursion to this beer fest and had a splendid time. Jan, as usual, found seats so that the beer could be consumed with more comfort!

FRIDAY MAY 3rd 2013, from 7.30pm, a joint evening hosted by **BMADS** and shared with **RACS** will be held to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of SPBW. Brewers from Brentwood Brewery and the Bishop's Stortford Brewery will be there to answer questions and provide beer from their breweries. During the evening there will be a Beery Quiz and a raffle and a buffet supplied by **RACS**. The Burnt Mill Social Club is situated a few minutes walk from Harlow Town Station and all are welcome.

SEE THE NEXT EDITION OF **RACSQ** FOR A REPORT ON THE EVENING'S FUN



The Rising Sun at High Wych has won Pub of The Year 2013, awarded by Herts and Essex Borders branch of CAMRA



*Following the report in the last issue of **RACSQ**, here's the promised picture of Trevor with his gliding trophy. It's the "**Mt Cook Air Services Ltd Trophy for best Individual Performance South Island**"*



SPBW AGM 2013

Five hardy **RACS** members braved the cold on Monday 11th to represent **RACS** at the SPBW 2013 AGM, held at Ye Old Watling in Watling Street, London EC4. It is a lovely, old Mitchells and Butlers pub and was a great venue with an upstairs room, which was larger than last year's venue. We were spoilt with waiter service for beer - on offer was Lancaster Blond, Norfolk Gold, Spring Hop, London Pride and a stout. A buffet was provided and a raffle was held at the close of business. **RACS** paid their dues for 2013 and a good night was had by all. **JAN**



NEW PROPOSALS TO HELP STRUGGLING PUBS GET A FAIR DEAL

Pubs struggling to pay rent or beer prices could save thousands of pounds a year each, thanks to a new Code of Practice and the backing of a powerful Adjudicator, under proposals announced by Employment Relations and Consumer Minister Jo Swinson. Ministers want to make sure that pub tenants are treated fairly by pub companies and hope that the new proposals will save tenants £100 million per year. The Code would contain mandatory rules for all pub companies who own a certain number of pubs. In particular it would stop pub companies abusing the beer tie, which obliges tenants to sell certain types of beers often at high prices. Under the proposals a new Adjudicator would have the power to:

- enforce the Code
- investigate any breaches, and
- deal with disputes through possible sanctions and fines

Under the proposals the Code will make sure that

- pubs are fairly and lawfully treated by pub companies
- tied pubs are no worse off than free-of-tie pubs
- pub companies charge fair rents and beer prices, with the possibility of open market rent reviews
- tied pubs could have the option of a guest beer, picked independently, which could help the growth of small beer and ale manufacturers in the community.

If pubs feel that they are being treated unfairly or there has been a breach of the Code, they will be able to complain to the Adjudicator who can investigate and arbitrate the dispute for them. They will have the power to enforce the Code and impose fines on pub companies if the breach is severe.

The consultation is available to view online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pub-companies-and-tenants-consultation> and will run until 14 June.

SPBW Heritage Pub Crawl

Report from Keith Caves

A pub crawl was organised by SPBW for Thursday April 11th as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations, visiting pubs with which SPBW has some sort of past connection, in the City of London and Holborn areas.

Ye Olde Watling

The crawl kicked off from the Ye Olde Watling at about 6.30. This is a City pub with some history, built around 1668 on the site of its predecessor which was burnt down in the Great Fire of London in 1666. It was re-built in 1901 and again after the blitz in 1947. It is named after the old Roman road on which it stands, Watling Street. It is said to have been originally built by Sir Christopher Wren as a hostel for his workmen during the building of St. Paul's and old ship's timbers were used in its construction.

This is a lovely Nicholson's pub, with the main bar to the front and a lounge 'Wren Bar' to the back (although it doesn't have a bar!). There is also a restaurant upstairs. It was incredibly busy, both inside the pub and out with a correspondingly high noise level. The clientele comprised mostly city types but with a fair sprinkling of tourists plus over twenty SPBW members. Two of the SPBW members, who happened to be ladies, had come down from Leeds – keen types clearly! The atmosphere was excellent and service was swift. There were eight hand pumped beers available and the Nicholson's Pale Ale was moreish – so I had another pint!

Williamson's Tavern

The next pub on the crawl just 50 yards from Ye Olde Watling, Williamson's Tavern is another of Nicholson's historic pubs, reached via a narrow alleyway off Bow Lane. It was originally occupied by Lord Mayors of London until around 1740 when it was sold to Robert Williamson who turned it into a hotel. It was first granted an intoxicating drinks licence in 1851. The wrought iron gates at the entrance were a gift from William III who dined with Queen Mary as the Lord Mayor's guests, they are monogrammed with the letters WM. Tiles now seen on the fireplace in the smaller bar are Roman, found on the site during restoration work in 1939. Folklore has it that inset into the wall of the lounge bar there is an inscribed tablet marking the exact centre of the City of London.

It is a lovely traditional pub (rebuilt in the 1930s) in the heart of the City of London. There are two bars, both were very busy but the back (lounge) bar marginally less so. That is where we congregated to select from the 6 hand pumped beers available. My choice was again the Nicholson's Pale Ale, safe but sound!

Viaduct Tavern

The third pub to be visited was the Viaduct Tavern, a ten minute walk from the previous pub. Originally built as a gin palace, it is situated opposite Holborn Viaduct. Queen Victoria opened the Holborn Viaduct in 1869, the same year as the Viaduct

Tavern was opened. Holborn Viaduct was the world's first flyover, connecting Holborn with Newgate Street, avoiding a deep dip in the road caused by the River Fleet. It is an impressive corner pub with a large curved frontage, which was sadly covered with scaffolding at the time of the SPBW visit. The interior of the pub is surprisingly small, but many of the original features have survived. On one wall, three paintings of wistful maidens represent agriculture, banking and the arts. The 'arts' was attacked (some say shot, others bayoneted) by a drunken First World War soldier, and she still bears the scar.

There are some wonderful gilded and silvered mirrors and fine examples of decorated glass. The ornate ceiling is made from beaten copper and is supported by cast iron pillars. At the back of the bar is a manager's stall, a sort of office booth, made from beautifully carved hardwood and intricately engraved glass panels. It was from here that the Victorian landlady would sell gin tokens to customers - a system put in place because her staff couldn't always be entirely trusted! The pub is presently owned by Fullers and provides four real ales on hand pumps. The London Pride was in excellent condition.

Ye Olde Mitre

About ten minutes from the Viaduct Tavern, Ye Olde Mitre was the fourth stop on our crawl. It is an authentic 'real' pub having no TVs, music or electronic games. Ye Olde Mitre has both a bar and lounge, as well as an upstairs function room. Outside there is an area provided with beer barrels on which to place glasses, an ideal place for having a drink in the warm weather. But it should be noted that the pub is closed weekends and Bank Holidays.

Ye Olde Mitre Tavern is a well-concealed pub, in a little yard just off Hatton Garden. Of course, like any pub in the City, it gets overrun at the usual times - lunch and immediately after work – and it was still very busy when we got there after nine o'clock. It is now owned by Fullers and the beers are well kept (SPBW's current pub of the year). In addition to two of Fuller's usual suspects there are beers from Adnams and Caledonian on the four hand pumps in the lounge and a number of guests on the hand pumps in the bar. Once again, I can commend the London Pride. There are a couple of rumours, legends or myths (take your pick) surrounding this pub. The first is that the pub is not actually in London, but the origins of the pub can account for some of the confusion. The original pub was built in 1547 for the servants of the Bishop of Ely from Cambridgeshire, whose London palace was just next door in Ely Place. Thus the palace and its environs (including the pub) were the Bishop's domain. The pub was demolished in 1772 and quickly rebuilt. From what can be gleaned, it stayed (officially) under Cambridgeshire's aegis until sometime in the 20th Century - the City of London police, apparently, had no jurisdiction there. The second legend is that the tree trunk preserved in the corner of the small bar was the original boundary marker for the diocese and that Queen Elizabeth I danced the maypole around it with Sir Christopher Hatton.

Nonetheless, Ye Olde Mitre Tavern is an historic, quirky and atmospheric place, replete with the panelling and odd little nooks and crannies you'd expect in such a place - and long may it remain so. The SPBW gang were due to go on to the Craft Beer Co. in Leather Lane after finishing at Ye Olde Mitre. Unfortunately I had to part company at about 9.45 to get to Liverpool Street for the 10.28 train to take me to Sawbridgeworth.

So the CBC will have to wait until the next time – perhaps **RACS** could get a group together to sample its delights?