

British Guild Of Beer Writers

Newsletter — September 2006

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Chairman Tim Hampson goes crystal-gazing *inside...*

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The Chairman Reports...

The next few weeks will be a busy period for the Guild — members will hopefully be preparing their entries for this year's awards, which are bigger and better than ever, preparations are underway for our annual dinner and a series of brewery visits are planned.

Members can enter their work for the following prizes:

The Award for National Beer Journalism — includes the national press, consumer magazines, national television and radio and internet, web pages and other electronic media. First prize of £1,000. Sponsor to be announced.

The Cains Finest Lager Award for Regional Journalism, for the very best regional beer writing or broadcasting — includes local and regional newspapers, radio and television, CAMRA newsletters and books published regionally. First prize of £1,000 and a weekend for two in a top Liverpool hotel, while a runner-up will receive an award of £500 in prize money. Sponsored by Cains.

The Bishops Finger Beer with Food Award, for beer and food writing — the piece can be written or broadcast in national, local or regional media, it could be in a trade magazine or a company publication, on the internet or part of a video. The objective is to encourage journalists to write or broadcast material on the subject of matching beer with food, a subject area formerly dominated

by wine. There is a first prize of £1,000 and a weekend break at a Shepherd Neame pub hotel for the winner and his/her partner.

Sponsored by Shepherd Neame.

The Budvar Travel Bursary — for the entrant considered by the judges to benefit most from a travel bursary, with a prize of £1,000 plus a trip to the brewery in the Czech Republic. The winner will be encouraged to write a feature on wherever they visit, which will be published on the Guild's website.

The Wells & Young's Trade and Technical Journalism Award — for the very best writing in trade and company newspapers, newsletters, magazines and websites. First prize of £1,000, while the runner-up will receive £500. Sponsored by Wells & Young's.

The Whitstable Bay Organic Brewed with Sustainability Award — beer writers will be encouraged to submit articles that promote beer as a healthy, natural product using sustainable raw ingredients and brewing processes. There is a first prize of £1,000 and a weekend break at a Shepherd Neame pub hotel for the winner and his/her partner. Sponsored by Shepherd Neame.

Full details of the awards and where to send entries will be announced shortly, but I am very grateful that PR company SEAL has agreed to manage much of the logistics of the awards

Annual Dinner

THERE ARE some exciting developments with our annual dinner. First of all, we have a fabulous new location, the Millennium Gloucester Hotel in Kensington. This modern and impressive four-star deluxe hotel is located in the heart of Kensington, less than a minute's walk from Gloucester Road tube making it much easier for members to get to, and, more importantly, easier for them to stay

CALENDAR 2006

Sept	Launch of the Good Beer Guide
Sept 28-30	Great American Beer Festival, Denver
Oct 14	CAMRA awards lunch, Canal House, Nottingham
Oct	CAMRA cider month

Dec 7	British Guild of Beer Writers Awards & Beer Banquet, Millennium Gloucester Hotel, South Kensington
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**Please send details of
any relevant events to
Adrian Tierney-Jones**

later. The date for the dinner is Thursday, December 7. This year we have asked celebrity chef Brian Turner to prepare the menu and believe his involvement will raise the profile of this important event even more.

A further bonus of the new location is that we will be able to seat more people — and we are currently planning for 150 people seated at 15 tables. A further change is that we will be encouraging companies to buy tables for the dinner — so that they can bring more key personnel and media contacts to the dinner. We will shortly writing to all corporate members encouraging them to take a table.

Future visits

HOP WALK — Charles Faram in Herefordshire. Includes a tasting of seven beers, each brewed with a different hop. This is planned for September 7.

SHEPHERD NEAME on October 5/6 — includes hop blessing and meeting with MEPs.

ASPALLS CIDER have offered a trip.

THWAITES have offered a trip for next year — to celebrate the brewery's 200th anniversary.

THERE IS a possibility of a beer/food dinner in York in September organised by the northern branch of the BBPA.

BARRIE PEPPER is organising a beer tasting of small brewers' beers in Leeds.

A TASTING of vintage Thomas Hardy Ales is planned.

SIX MEMBERS are invited on a trip to

OKELLS on the Isle of Man — a date is still to be arranged — but anyone interested should contact Tim Hampson with details of where they can place a story.

Website

THE WEBSITE continues to evolve and there has been a very positive feedback to our policy of putting press releases up on the website and the news alerts.

Following the suggestion from one of our corporate members, they have been added to the news alert service.

Several other changes are planned, including a new front page, which will make it easier to keep track of press releases.

Young's Seminar

I WOULD like to thank all those involved in organising the annual seminar at Young's brewery in Wandsworth. Entitled *Foam Sweet Home: Does it Matter Where Beer is Brewed*, the seminar featured articulate and provocative presentations from Young's Ken Don, Meantime's Alastair Hook, Adnams' Simon Loftus and Rupert Thompson from Refresh UK.

A lively discussion was kept under control by the seminar's chairman Andrew Pring. The subject is one that will continue to raise many pertinent questions for journalists about the meaning of provenance and the importance of ingredients, location, equipment and personnel to a beer. I am sure it is a topic that we will return to again.

Tim Hampson

The Secretary's round...

IT WAS good to see so many Guild members at the traditional pre-GBBF White Horse event, where Mister Dorber was awarded with a Guild tankard to celebrate 25 years at this shining beacon of good beer and food. More members were visible next day at Earls Court, which I personally believe is a great improvement on Olympia, especially with the transport connections — no more hanging about at Earls Court tube waiting for the connection. The third-pint glasses were also a great development, which enabled more beers to be tasted (as if that was an excuse).

PITFIELD FINDS HOME

GUILD MEMBER and Pitfield Brewery owner Martin Kemp has finally found a new home for his brewery after leaving East London. The brewery is now based on the Essex-Suffolk border at London Road, Great Horksley, CO6 4AJ, just outside Colchester. The new larger site will enable the company to expand their wholesale trade and their retail internet sales. The site will also allow Martin to expand into both cider and perry production with a new Farmhouse cider and Fred's Perry brands, which now takes the range of beers and ciders to 15. The number for ordering beer is 0845 833 1492, or go to www.pitfieldbeershop.co.uk.

CALLING ALL TEGESTOLOGISTS

ANY TEGESTOLOGISTS (beer mat collectors to the rest of us) in the Guild might be interested in *A Guide To Collecting Beer Mats*, details of which have sent to the Guild by author Ian Calvert. This is a book targeted at both new and established collectors, and provides tips of storage and dating mats etc. Within the gallery section there are over 1,000 scanned images of mats dating back to 1929. All the mats are from UK Breweries and include many obsolete breweries and brand names. There are 176 pages in full colour throughout and it costs £16.99, plus postage and packaging. For more information contact Ian at 14/3 Hermand Terrace, Edinburgh EH11 1QZ or email ian.calvert@NTL.com.

RAKING IT IN

THE WAIT is over as the boys from Utobeer open their long anticipated pub in Borough Market. The Rake is possibly one of the most bijoux bars in London but what it lacks in stature it certainly makes up for in content, with 110 bottled beers in the fridges alone. Set in the shadow of Southwark Cathedral, it is a lesson in how buildings can be restored to their former glory with the original Pilkington glass-panelled ceiling still in place and an excellent use of space both inside and out. However this, combined with the fact that they have Thomas Hardy's Vintage on tap, doesn't seem to be enough for some people as one customer was heard to ask staff, whilst brandishing a bottle: 'Do you have this?' Barman: 'No, we sell it on the stall though — we will probably rotate it with one of the lines at some point. Can I offer you something else?' Customer (without a hint of irony): 'No, I think I'll come back when you've got more beers.' *Melissa Cole*

LECTURES

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES at Kew (formerly the Public Records Office) currently have an exhibition tracing the history of beer and spirits. Entitled *The History of Alcohol 1690-1920*, it is currently running until March 31, 2007. It examines how various governments have regulated the industry through taxation

and looks at attempts by customs officers to stamp out smuggling. On September 28 the same venue will host a lecture entitled *The Dichotomies of Drink* to be given by Philippa Glanville, Senior Research Fellow at the V&A and author of the forthcoming book *The Art of Drinking*. She will consider the social impact of alcohol in England between the 1690s and the Beer House Act of 1830. Both exhibition and lecture are free. The lecture is on a first-come first-in basis and kicks off at 7pm.

Visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/events

for more details.

Peter Haydon

BACK TO COLLEGE

Following the comments at the last two AGMs about a Guild team entering *University Challenge* — *The Professionals*, I have had a response from the programme's producer, who has promised to get back to us when the next series is being set up. Assuming that the Guild will be selected to participate, would any member interested in being in the team please indicate to Adrian. Suggestions as to how the lucky four should be selected will also be welcome.

Roy Bailey

TWO BROTHERS FROM BUDWEIS

GUILD MEMBER and Budvar PR Controller Denis Cox would like to challenge Guild members to come up with the funniest alternative history of the two brothers from Budweis. According to Denis, his idea is based on the history of the two brands (Budvar and Budweiser as if you didn't know) found on the Wetherspoons website claiming that the Budvar Brewery was founded by two brothers, one who subsequently went to the US and the other who stayed home...the rest being history. A sort of Cain and Abel cereal thriller (with added rice). The Guild member who submits the funniest alternative/bizarre history (up to 500 words) will win three cases of Budvar Original. Entries to Denis (denis.cox@budvaruk.com) by the end of October, with the winning entry also being published in the newsletter and on the website.

Tim Hampson