

British Guild Of Beer Writers

Newsletter – July 2006

‘The Guild’s primary objective is to improve the standards of writing and broadcasting on **beer** and beer-related topics, the status of the journalists and authors involved, and the public’s understanding and appreciation of the qualities of beer.’

New Chairman Tim Hampson sets out his stall *inside...*

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The Chairman Reports...

IT IS my ambition as newly elected Chairman of the Guild to raise the profile of beer and beer writing in the UK.

The Guild's primary objective is to improve the standards of writing and broadcasting on beer and beer-related topics, the status of the journalists and authors involved, and the public's understanding and appreciation of the qualities of beer.

I therefore commend to everyone our Strategic Plan that the last committee developed and which Pete Brown presented at the AGM.

It sets out our main priorities for 2006-07.

We shall:

- Continue to organise trips, run awards and organise social events.
- Build stronger dialogue with other groups promoting beer.
- Create more interaction between members.
- Improve the value of the Guild to the licensed trade.
- Build relationships with key commissioning editors.

Already work is in hand to meet these priorities. Our flagship event — the Awards Dinner — has a new venue, the Millennium Gloucester in South Kensington, and we should be very grateful to Larry Nelson for taking this project forward. The involvement of celebrity chef Brian Turner can only help us raise the profile of the event and together with the support of the sponsors we plan to improve publicity for and the profile of the awards. The bigger and better venue will allow more of us to celebrate the very best of

beer writing, and the Chairman of the judges Alastair Gilmour will be working hard to make sure this happens.

We are improving our trips — and hope to make them a platform for the host to invite local journalists to the event. On the recent Moorhouses trip, our host invited a radio journalist to join us, who was then able to broadcast a live beer tasting with Melissa Cole.

We will build a stronger dialogue with other groups promoting beer and will be approaching BBPA, Cask Marque, CAMRA, Beautiful Beer and the Beer Academy, who are all trying to do similar things to us, to discuss how we can add value to them and how they in turn can add value to us.

We want there to be more interaction between members as we should not underestimate the social role of the Guild and I look forward to saying hello to you all at the White Horse in Parsons Green on the eve of CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival.

We will undertake a concerted new membership drive to broaden our profile. John White will continue to develop the website so that it disseminates information and allow members to interact, share tips and contacts, and Adrian Tierney-Jones will continue to develop the newsletters and email news alerts.

We will improve the value of the Guild to the licensed trade and will look to ways of improving our links with all breweries and their PR teams and we'll talk to corporate members about how to improve what they get for corporate membership, and what they can contribute in turn.

We will build relationships with key commissioning editors, and as a start of this process we will be issuing a press release based on the research undertaken for us by Storm Lantern which shows that there are beer enthusiasts all around the country.

They are young, upmarket, affluent and well-

CALENDAR 2006

July 12	All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group Annual Awards Dinner
July 31	Guild's pre-GBBF reception, London @ the White Horse, Parsons Green
Aug 1-5	Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court
Sept	Launch of the Good Beer Guide
Sept 28-30	Great American Beer Festival

Oct	CAMRA awards lunch, date and venue to be confirmed
Dec 7	British Guild of Beer Writers Awards & Beer Banquet, Millennium Gloucester Hotel, South Kensington

Please send details of any relevant events to Adrian Tierney-Jones

educated and they want to read about beer — but are being let down by the media.

In conclusion, I would like to give a big thank you to Andrew Pring for his chairmanship over the last three years, as well as to Martyn Cornell and Kamini Dickie, who are standing down from the committee. And I'd like to give a big welcome to Melissa Cole, Ben McFarland and Alastair Gilmour for agreeing to add their experience to your committee. *Tim Hampson*

The Secretary's round...

JUST TO let members know that the Guild's traditional pre-GBBF reception is once again held at the White Horse on the evening of Monday, July 31, and I look forward to seeing lots of members there. It is a good kick-off to the the UK's premier beer festival and it will also give members a chance to raise a glass to Mark Dorber's celebration of 25 years at this temple of good beer and food.

PLEASE NOTE: I am away July 7-24, please contact Tim Hampson with anything urgent on the secretarial front. The next newsletter will be out at the end of August and copy date for contributions is *AUGUST 20*.

MOORHOUSES VISIT

BURNLEY'S AWARD-WINNING brewery hosted an immaculate Guild trip in June. After celebrating 140 years of brewing last year, they are now looking forward to the future with plans to develop a new brewhouse at the back of the current one. As ever, the brewery's ebullient MD David Grant was on hand to answer members' questions and get the drinks in. The evening kicked off with a tour of some of the brewery's pubs and we also met the legendary Bill Parkinson, the man who reputedly liked the beer so much that he bought the brewery. Thanks go to Guild member Steve Hobden for organising the event. *AT-J*

GUILD SEMINAR

THE GUILD'S annual seminar is announced for Wednesday July 26 at Young's Brewery in Wandsworth. Entitled *Foam Sweet Home: Does it Matter Where Beer is Brewed*, the seminar will feature a panel of Ken Don from Young's, Alastair Hook of Meantime and Simon Loftus from Adnams, who will each speak for 15 minutes on whether they think provenance is important to a beer's success.

This is a very important point given Young's imminent departure from London. Andrew Pring will chair the meeting and debate will be invited from the floor. The event will kick off at 6pm at Young's Brewery and there will be a maximum of 45 places. The event should take about two hours before those attending retire for drinks. Names please to Tim Hampson.

GOD SAVE THE KING (OF BEER)

DERBY HAS been doing its bit for European unity this year. The City Council invited Osnabrück's Oberbürgermeister and other civic dignitaries over earlier in the year to celebrate 30-years of the twinning link between the two cities. The local Beer Festival Committee continued this link and invited Osnabrück's Gambrinus, or Beer King, over to open the city's 29th Festival on July 5, with the Mayor and Derby's own Beer King (*ie Les Baynton — Ed*). Ferdinand Vohrmann is Osnabrück's third King and stayed in Derby with his wife for the week of the festival. He brought his impressive costume with him, which had been handed down over the years and put his Derby counterpart a little in the shade, as this is only the third year of the Derby King's reign and he has not yet acquired a costume quite as regal as Ferdinand's. *Les Baynton*

GUILD TRIPS

TWENTY-FIVE MEMBERS have indicated they would like to accept WELLS & YOUNG'S invitation to visit Bedford. I am still waiting for a date to be confirmed but it is hoped it will be in September.

SHEPHERD NEAME has invited the Guild to its Faversham home on October 5-6. There will be a beer tasting, a tour of the brewery and a Hop Blessing at the local church. Anyone interested in attending should contact Tim Hampson on tim@infopub.co.uk.

An extra dimension to the trip is that a group of MEPs has also been invited to the brewery on Thursday, and it is likely that we will having dinner with them.

There are also plans to have a tasting of local micros' beers in Yorkshire in the autumn, hopefully there will be more on this in the next newsletter.

BEERS OF THE WORLD

GUILD MEMBER Dominic Roskrow gets in touch to say that he is stepping down as *Beers of the World* editor in September. New editor is Sally Toms, currently *BOTW*'s pictures and news editor. Dominic will still be involved as consultant editor, but is setting up his own drinks freelance, consultancy and hospitality business. He also intends to open a shop in Norwich specialising initially in whisky, but it will eventually include beer to promote the region's thriving brewing industry. He can be contacted on 07721 374397.

ON THE BEER IN BRUGES

THE PUBLISHING company of Guild member Tim Webb has just produced its second book: *Around Bruges in 80 Beers*, by Chris Pollard & Siobhan McGinn (Cogan & Mater, ISBN 0-9547789-1-X, 96pp, £ 7.99/€10.95). This is a full-colour guide to 80 of the best bars, restaurants, hotels and off-licenses (plus a boat!) in Bruges, featuring a different beer from an independent Belgian brewery in each outlet. The book came out on June 17, just as stocks of C&M's first book, *Lambic(k)Land*, sold out. Review copies of *Around Bruges in 80 Beers* are available from Tim Webb via BelgiumGBG@aol.com.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

BACK IN June various guild members attended *A Celebration of American Craft Brewing* at the White Horse in London. The event was hosted jointly by the Brewers Association and the United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service, with Bob Pease, Vice President of the Brewers Association, kicking off the evening with a speech on the American craft beer market. He explained that the craft beer sector in the US is the fastest growing sector in brewing, with a 7% growth in 2004 and 9% the following year.

Matching food with beer was the order of the evening and, between courses, Mark Dorber explained his selections. The beers served were: North Coast Scrimshaw Pilsner, Brooklyn Lager, Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Victory Golden Monkey, Rogue Smoke, Dogfish Head Raison D'Etre, Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout, Left Hand Imperial Stout, Flying Dog Snake Dog IPA, Odell Cut Throat Porter and Sam Adams Triple Bock.

Individual food/beer pairings provoked animated discussions amongst the diners — the conjunction of Rogue Smoke and a delightful rack of Romney Marsh Lamb proving the most controversial.

Visitors from US breweries — Eric Wallace of Left Hand Brewing Company, Doug Odell of Odell Brewing Company, Adam Lambert of Rogue Ales, Bill Covaleski of Victory Brewing Company and Fred Mendes of Boston Beer Company — explained the origins and inspirations behind their beers.

Michael Jackson rounded off the evening speaking on the vibrancy of the US craft beer scene. Much as the evening was billed as *A Celebration of American Craft Brewing*, US visitors were looking to promote their wares, but, according to brewery owner Doug Odell, — 'I sense we're preaching to the choir'.

Jeff Pickthall

SIBA NEWS

THE SOCIETY of Independent Brewers has made its largest ever financial contribution through a donation to the National Hops Association (NHA) and challenged the remainder of the British brewing industry to match its contribution to help save the future of British hops.

SIBA has donated £10,000 to the NHA's attempt to replace the hop research institute at Wye College, which is to be closed through a significant funds shortfall. The Hop R & D Department at Wye has been the hop breeding centre for 100 years and is responsible for developing new hop varieties.

SIBA Chairman Keith Bott commented: 'The future of hop research is crucial to a healthy British beer industry. Our policy is to reinvest in our industry on behalf of our members as the Wye EMR research work has been a key ingredient in their success. The variety and premium quality of our members' local beers would not be possible without the pioneering, innovative work undertaken by the Wye EMR. As the most representative British brewing organisation it is only right we support them at this critical time and I call on other industry bodies to match our donation.'

Paul Corbett, MD of Charles Faram, who supply the majority of hops to the winning beers in SIBA's annual beer competition, said: 'SIBA's contribution is a huge help. It is imperative that this research continues to assist in the ongoing supply of British hops. Many varieties have been developed from the breeding programme and now contribute to the quality and range of beers that are brewed with them.'

Steve Griffin