

May 2024 First Rural report

As said, Taffy's newsletter has stopped and we haven't found an editor. He's happy to provide a rural report and so below is what he's 'seen & heard'. If you think you could be the editor and put together a newsletter, we'd like to hear from you.

In the past month after the last newsletter, I have visited all three pubs in Littleport.

**The Plough & Harrow**, while having clips on two pumps (Caledonian Deuchars and GK Spring Break) had just GK Ice Breaker fizz (£5.90 PP! phew!) having no real ale on. One pump actually didn't even function so it's possibly smoke and mirrors there.

The pub looks better for more than the old 100% whitewash with some green paint inside and plants etc. This week they start with a proper pub menu as opposed to being just 'Forbidden Burger' food from the left-hand end of the building. They also have taken over the Kitchen at the Townhouse so can we expect 'Forbidden Burgers' from there.

**The Swan on the River** still only sells Level Head fizz by GK.

**The Crown** had '5G' on from Batemans; a beautiful ale and whilst mine was cloudy, it tasted fine. Said to have two ales on, I've only ever seen one. There's a Bikes & Bands event on Saturday 25.04.2024 when they assure me there will be 3 real ales on.

**The Ship** at Brandon Creek had just two real ales on pump pull last Sunday in Lacon's Encore and GKs IPA. Both were served well. Again, they say they 'usually' have three.

**The Plough**, Little Downham is on two real ales with Papworth's Half Nelson well-kept and Proper Job as well. Kept very well, the pub is very busy and Wutt is often seen smiling (rare!).

The beer at **The Fountain**, Soham has recently thrown a wobbler, as reported in the last newsletter, Phil and Sylvia were required elsewhere and the beer went to pot. Consequently, the Fountain, which had just started to challenge the Carpenters (3 ales) with 3 real ales of their own has fallen back and will have job getting going again, and, given the two, the Carpenters will get the nod for now. But this past two weekends Phil has had three real ales on and they were all great and as they say; he's "back in the game!" How about varying them up Phil? It's Doombur, Landlord and Osset's Silver King or White Rat (one Osset at a time) presently.

**The Carpenters Arms**, Soham is serving three quality ales every week with lots of different Woodforde ales on. Try the Harlequin sometime; it's superb! This past weekend we had the Robinson's Trooper (the pump clip is better than the beer), Woodforde's Admiral's Reserve 5.0% and Lacon's legendary Norfolk Gem 3.6% and yet the Reserve and the Gem tasted of very similar strength. Question; Lacon's please, how did you do it?

**The Maids Head**, Wicken did have a poor Henry's at the end of the barrel (exchanged no problem) and the Wherry was fine and they have two sometimes three real ales on throughout the week as the tourists return. Generally, the beers are very good now. The pub under owner Kevin Henderson has said 'all in' and pushed the chips into the middle of the table. So, it has gone from a 5-day week to open 7 days again for the first time since 2019 approx. Gutsy!

**The Carpenters Arms**, Soham has a Beer Festival from Friday 2nd to the 4th of August. More to follow....

Rumour has it that **The Crown**, Fordham will re-open as a pub this time and not an Indian based Gastro. The pub, suffered from an arson attack last year and is being rebuilt. The Roadworks in front of the pub have seen a single lane and traffic lights ever since making the Isleham Rd/Collins Hill crossroads fraught for everyone and add to this a Primary School just 100m away. If it is to be a pub again it won't be "challenged" by either The Chequers or The White Pheasant in the village as both are Gastros. The main opposition will be the British Legion just 200m away which has it nailed and even has two real ales on.

The views are, as usual, entirely Taffy's personal take on things.

Taffy