

Solihull Drinker

Issue Number 55, Winter 2010

Off Our Patch

The Ostrich Inn sits in the pretty village of Newland, which lies on the edge of the Forest of Dean and adjoins the Wye Valley, both areas of outstanding natural beauty. The pub lies in the middle of the village, and is thought to take its name from the ostrich emblem used by the previous landowners for centuries, the Probyns. The church opposite, All Saints, is known as the Cathedral of the Forest, and the pub, dating back to the thirteenth century, was originally built to house the workers who built the church.

This pub is a real gem: a true village pub, at the heart of its community, where events happen all year round, starting with New Year celebrations and including Easter, Mayday, early Summer, Halloween, Christmas and Wassail-time. It prides itself on its food which ranges from bar food and upmarket snacks, to full lunch and evening meals. There is one room dedicated to dining, and a country bar, with a working inglenook fireplace, settles, and wooden shutters.



The small bar belies its size when you realise that they have up to 8 excellently kept real ales. On the day of visiting there were 7 available: Archers' Crystal Clear (5%), Wychwood Hobgoblin (5%).



Hopback's Hopfest (4.6%), Shepherd Neame's Late Red (4.5%), Butcombe's Blond Bitter (4.3%), Sharps' Doombar Bitter (4%) and Firefly Bitter (3.7%); the Brains' Merlin's Oak (4.3%) having just gone. Also available were Budvar lager, Westons Old Rosie and Stowford Press ciders. Kathryn, the landlady, explained that she has to use top pressure to assist with beer pouring, as the cellars where the beer is stored are 40 feet away from the bar. She did try it without when she first took

over, but was throwing away at least half of what she was serving so had to resort to the frowned-upon method. For this reason, you will not find the Ostrich in the Good Beer Guide - a shame.

The pub is an excellent find in an out-of-the-way place, well worth a visit and also a good starting point for exploring the beautiful countryside all around.

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