

# cider matters

NEWS FROM THE UK CIDER INDUSTRY

Issue No. 17  
April 2006

## PLAYING OUR PART

**The Wetland Ecosystem**  
Treatment system at Weston's cider mill in Herefordshire is a picturesque example of the commitment of the UK cider industry to play a leading role in promoting the sustainability agenda.

The system not only cleans the cider mill waste water but, through its earth banks, ditches and ponds planted with several thousand water plants and trees, has become a significant local nature reserve.

See pages 6&7.

PUT YOUR CIDER ON THE SHELVES AT **TESCO**. SEE THE LEAFLET INSIDE

# VOICE OF CIDER

## Signed up to sustainability

As climate change stories seem to get more alarming with each new report, the responsibility of everyone to play their part in achieving sustainable growth and development becomes ever more urgent.

The cider industry understands the importance of this issue and, while sustainable practices are not new to cider makers, there is a discernible quickening of the pace as examples come in thick and fast of best practice processes and procedures being applied right through the production chain.

Some are already well established, such as cutting down the use of pesticides in

orchards and encouraging wildlife through programmes that create orchard margins, hedges and ponds to encourage a wider diversity of flora and fauna.

Another spectacular example is the 'W.E.T' system at Weston's site at Much Marcle featured on the front page, but elsewhere other, perhaps less photogenic, examples – but no less important – such as boiler replacement, are playing an important role in reducing emissions.

It demonstrates that the cider industry is fully 'signed up' to this vital task.

We will bring you more examples in future issues.



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Cider now seen by consumers as a quality drink

# Going upmarket

**Latest statistics** show that cider is shedding its 'cheap alcohol' image and being increasingly recognised as a 'quality' drink by consumers.

In the last 12 months, there has been a 7% reduction in 'white cider' volumes and other strong types to premium and traditional ciders not relying on strength as their selling point.

These ciders have grown by an encouraging 21% over that time and are now much more evident behind pub bars and on supermarket shelves.

'The industry has put a huge amount of effort into developing a wide range of exciting, quality ciders of distinctive character and it looks as if this is being rewarded in sales,' said Helen Thomas, chair of the National Association of Cider Makers.

She said this trend was part of a more general uplift in the fortunes of



*The last 12 months have seen significant activity intended to give new impetus to the mainstream cider market and to secure the consumer move to premium and traditional styles of cider.*

cider in the last two years which has seen growth of 9% in that time.

## A strong relationship

Commenting on the recent Budget, Helen said the industry welcomed the Chancellor's restraint in not increasing the duty on cider again this year – coming as it did after seven increases since the mid-90s.

'We were most grateful to receive a 2% reduction in the duty rate in 2002 and a standstill in the three following years, which has resulted in us being able to continue to reinvest in our local economies,' she said. 'As a significant rural employer, we have committed to use this

benefit to support UK apple production and the other Sustainable Development initiatives now beginning.

'I believe that we have presented our case to Government well and enabled them to understand more fully the important role cider plays in supporting the rural economy.'

Sales of 'alcopops', better known as the Ready to Drink sector, have plunged from 4.5% of the UK drinks market in 2002 to 2.3% in September 2005.

■ The total amount of duty and VAT payments by the cider industry to the Treasury in 2005 are well in excess of £400 million.



## Shepton partnership brings rewards for all

**A commitment** to giving all its workers the opportunity to fully develop their potential has led to Gaymers Shepton Mallet Cider Mill being presented with a prestigious award.

Around 100 members of staff at Shepton signed up for a range of short courses in subjects like IT skills and maths under the national 'Skills for Life' initiative through local providers Strode College.

The objective of the courses is to make additional learning opportunities accessible to everyone and, through the enthusiastic support of Site Director Maurice Cox, courses have been held at a dedicated 'Learning Centre' at the cider mill.

'It was a partnership between the company and employees, with both parties giving some of their own time,' said Maurice.

The courses were designed to get participants to Level 2 in their chosen subject – which is GCSE equivalent – so providing a firm basis for further study as required and allowing participants to develop their full potential. In fact, a good number of people are currently progressing beyond that.

'We wanted to offer this facility to provide our people with an opportunity for self development,' said Maurice. 'This flexible method of delivery opened up learning opportunities for many people who, because of shift work, could never have accessed traditional opportunities.'

All the effort paid off and the site and Strode College gained a prestigious Learning Skills Council award 'Working in Partnership to Benefit the Learner'.

■ *Anyone interested in providing the same facilities for their staff should contact their local further education college, who can access the 'free at the point of delivery' service.*

**I believe that we have presented our case to Government well and enabled them to understand more fully the important role cider plays in supporting the rural economy**

# QUALITY TOPS CIDER

**Cider quality** in the UK is now almost certainly at the highest and most consistent level in its history.

While sustained investment by cider makers in plant and process over recent years has been crucial, a rigorous code of practice and testing regime – unique in the UK drinks industry – has also played a major role.

Each year, a representative sample of the products of the nation's 250 large and small cider makers is subjected to independent analysis and verification to ensure compliance with a detailed technical Code of Practice set out by the National Association of Cider Makers. All its members must agree to adhere to it, and cider makers are also asked to certify ongoing compliance every three months.

For Guy Hobson, Bulmer Technical Director and chairman of the Technical Committee that oversees the process, there are few things more important than quality.

'If you ask me how important quality is on a scale of 1-10, I would say 10. It is at the heart of our offering to our customers. We are a small industry and it is absolutely essential that we produce and maintain the highest possible levels of quality at all times,' he said.

'Going back several decades, there was a lot of poor quality cider out there but, in the last 10 years in particular, the improvements have been dramatic and today cider can

stand comparison with any of the other alcoholic drinks sold in the market.'

In fact, he believes it is a fundamental requisite for success in today's highly competitive market.

'If cider is not consistent and of a high quality, it gives the impression that it is not a serious drink and consumers will react accordingly. That is why the Code of Practice itself and its associated monitoring is so important to our industry.'

The Code, originally devised 20 years ago, lays down a list of analytical parameters for cider and perry that cover a range of issues from ensuring alcoholic strength remains within agreed limits to colour and permitted additives. It also outlines authorised practices for cider makers and, of course, all necessary legal and health and safety requirements.

The actual testing of randomly selected products

**We are not paying lip-service to quality – the Code of Practice has real teeth**

from across the industry is carried out completely independently by experts in this field – currently Surrey-based Brewing Research International – who provide technical, information and research

**If you ask me how important quality is on a scale of 1-10, I would say 10**

services to the global brewing malting and drinks industries. The results are then evaluated by a specialist consultant who feeds the conclusions to the Technical Committee – with the names of participants removed to ensure complete objectivity and transparency.

If action is required, the consultant discusses this with the maker concerned and the remedies.

Although it has never been necessary to date, the final sanction for makers who do not comply with the Code is a request that they leave the Association. 'In other words, we are not paying lip-service to quality – it has real teeth,' said Guy.

And, important though the annual monitoring programme clearly is, it is not the full extent of the industry's attempts to ensure only the highest quality products reach supermarket shelves or pub bars.

'Every three months, we ask member companies to certify, in writing, that they are making their products to the Code of Practice – and the Code is a serious piece of work containing a lot of detail on what is and what is not permissible,' said Guy.

He said another important benefit, particularly for smaller producers, was the reassurance



*Guy Hobson, Bulmer Technical Director and chairman of the Technical Committee.*



**The purpose of the Code is to ensure a consistent quality and standard for the making of cider and perry ...**

# MAKERS' AGENDA

it gave them when dealing with retailers. 'It means they can say they have the backing of the NACM in terms of the quality and safety of their product, which is good for them, and gives confidence to the people buying it.'

And it's a dynamic and flexible process. As conditions change and analytical processes improve, so do the range of checks.

'Each year, we review our testing regime and consider what we should change or add to reflect the current situation and adapt the analysis to the concerns of the day. This year, for example, we will be increasing the number of checks done on pesticides and heavy metals.'

The Technical Committee also acts as a watchdog on cider being brought into the UK for sale and has analysed and taken appropriate action where it felt it could bring cider into disrepute because of the way it is made or its contents.

And what has been the outcome of this approach? 'I am pleased to say that our latest monitoring exercise showed that we did not have one single case of non-compliance,' said Guy.

# Industry gets into gear over sustainability

**SUSTAINABILITY** The pace is quickening in the industry's effort to play a full role in the sustainability agenda, with a range of initiatives due during the year.

As we reported in the last issue, the NACM has formed a Sustainable Development Committee to lead and manage the industry's response to this vitally important issue.

Working closely with the independent Bulmer Foundation, the Committee is planning to have

identified 'best practice' in a range of areas, with benchmarks where possible. They plan to give a clear lead to the industry and to share information widely. Sustainable development will also form a key part of the NACM Foundation Course syllabus for the twice-yearly courses.

There are a number of specific initiatives already completed or under way:

■ At its Shepton Mallet Cider Mill, Gaymer Cider Company



*Practical as well as picturesque, the Wetland Ecosystem at Much Marcle.*

has just invested £1 million in replacing two boilers. The old boilers were fired by heavy fuel oil, and by switching to gas firing there will be a significant reduction in the environmental

emissions. Based on the current steam requirement this equates to a saving of about 4,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, 114 tonnes of SO<sub>2</sub> and 14 tonnes NO<sub>x</sub> per annum. The old boilers worked at an efficiency

*The new boilers at the Shepton Mallet Cider Mill, will significantly reduce emissions.*





of just 55%, while the new ones are at 80% – translating to energy savings of greater than 22,000 GigaJoules per year.

The company has also reported that it has obtained an 80% reduction in Climate Change Levy charges through signing an industry sector agreement. This commits the company to reducing its energy consumption through target milestones over a 10-year period.

■ At Weston's in Much Marcle, another sustainable project is operating well, and adding to the scenic quality of the area at the same time.

The Wetland Ecosystem Treatment, or W.E.T, for short, began life some 40 years ago when a few drainage ditches were dug to get rid of liquid waste.

But, as production grew, so did the volume, and in 1992 investigations showed that the 'swamp', as it was known, was able to handle the waste liquids even during the busiest months. Following studies of the Long Meadow site, the W.E.T. system based on permaculture principles was created.

■ Other investment in plant and equipment has also been taking place in recent months.

Over in Suffolk, Aspall has invested in three new fermentation tanks, one 50,000 litres and two 25,000 litres, as part of a £200,000 investment scheme.

They joined two 75,000 and one 50,000-litre tanks installed just before Christmas and are at the heart of an ongoing project to modernise production facilities at the Stowmarket site.

Said operations director Henry

Chevallier: 'These new tanks have been specially commissioned by us to an exact specification so that we can go into the summer of 2006 and beyond, confident that we can meet increasing demand while maintaining the quality of our cider.'

*Tradition and progress combine at Stowmarket.*

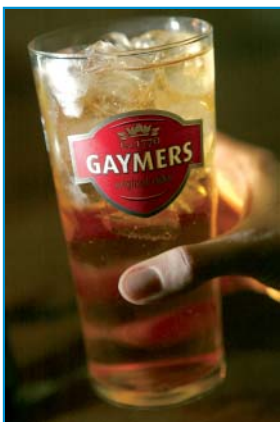
# RELAUNCH UNDER CONFIDENCE IN IN

## GAYMER CIDER COMPANY

Another huge vote of confidence in the future prospects of the UK cider industry comes with the announcement by Gaymer Cider Company of £24 million of advertising and promotions spend behind their brands.

This takes the total spend announced by the industry to nearly £50 million in a few months following a similar statement by Bulmer (see *previous edition*) and other investment across the category.

The spend, the largest made by the company in a



• Gaymers original cider, the third of the trio of new premium ciders, will be the subject of a £3 million launch campaign on TV and other advertising, where it is anticipated it will attract new consumers to cider.



decade, comes at a time of renewed optimism that the market can sustain and improve on the growth of the last 12 months. It also sees the company relaunched, after a fundamental review, with a new look and an array of new premium products.

Said John Mills, managing director of Gaymer Cider Company: 'Cider is currently the fastest growing drinks category in both the on and off trades and the great news is that it's been growing faster in the on trade.

'That says to me it's a real drinks phenomenon because, apart from wine, every drinks category is driven – either up or down – by the on trade.

'As people go out, a trend is created and is then reflected in their take home purchases.'

He said the major changes in the structure of the industry of recent years had now worked through and were providing the necessary focus and clarity to drive growth in the cider sector. The advent of some new players had also stimulated interest and attention



*John Mills, Managing Director of Gaymer Cider Company.*

among consumers.

'As confidence builds and people like us put more money in, it becomes a virtuous circle, as opposed to the kind of vicious cycle the industry suffered not so many years ago.'

So, how is Gaymer Cider Company responding to the opportunities?

Stage one was a back-to-basics approach with a fundamental review of every aspect of the business, taking nothing for granted or assuming what they had done thus far was right.

'We went right back to the beginning and lifted up every stone.

... products that are relevant and of interest to specific consumer groups

# LINE DUSTRY



'We wanted to see where our brands are now, and where the real consumer opportunities lay,' said John. 'This involved a major programme of consumer, trade and attitudinal research in the on and off trades across the whole consumer mix. As a result, we have a rich vein of understanding of the consumer.'

The result was to segment drinkers into five groups,

which firstly showed where the gaps in the product range were and identified the areas for the development of the brand range in a much more focused and targeted way. Initial results from this exercise have been three new products to augment already established brands, (see panels).

'It was definitely not a case of producing three new

brands and then thinking about what we would do with them,' he said. 'We now have a range of products that are relevant and of interest to specific consumer groups.'

But John recognises good products on their own are not enough. Alongside them, he believes Gaymer Cider Company can, uniquely, act as 'Category Champion' for cider.

'We can, for example, sit

down with the trade and say, "You have this fixture and we have the wherewithal, the insight and the passion to provide you with a service from entry point right through to super premium. We can take that total fixture and show you how we can make the bottom right hand corner work better for you". I can't see anyone else at present able to do that,' he said.

## PRODUCT WATCH

Two of the new products from the company are:



- Gaymer's Orchard Reserve, which now comes in three styles, dry, medium dry and medium. Each variety comes from the fruit of one orchard. The first is from the company's own Stewley Orchard near Taunton, and the others, which have just been launched, are from the Stonesbrook and Newtons Vale orchards, also in Somerset.

- Addlestones, a packaged version of the successful draught cloudy cider.



# UK makers support homegrown orchards

## UK ORCHARDS

The commitment to homegrown fruit by the UK cider market has been underlined with the latest statistics showing that the use of concentrated apple juice from abroad has reduced by almost two-thirds from the levels of a decade ago.

UK cider makers now purchase some 42% of ALL the apples grown in the UK, and the amount of imported concentrated juice is likely to fall even more as the orchards planted as part of a massive investment by cider makers a decade ago begin to bear fruit in commercial quantities.

But this commitment has come at

a cost to the industry. For many years, the price of concentrated apple juice on world markets has been consistently lower, making it considerably cheaper to use than home-produced juice.

Said NACM consultant Nick Bradstock: 'Our commitment to UK growers and orchards therefore brings higher cost to UK cider making.'

'A 10%

replacement of UK apples by imported concentrate would save around £½ million a year, but the industry is determined to support the rural economy as much as it is able.'

The 2005 cider apple crop was the seventh successive harvest to have exceeded 100,000 tonnes.

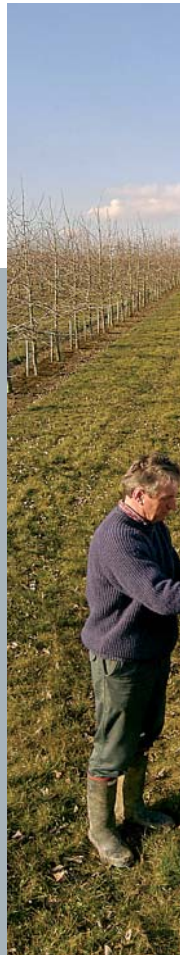
**Cider apples are estimated to be four times more costly as a source of fermentable matter than is barley – or other grain material.**

## GAYMERS

An example of one of the orchards just coming on stream is the 160-acre site at Stone and Lydford near Shepton Mallet.

Owned by Bob Wadey, it was part of a major programme by Gaymer Cider Company in 1997 that saw a total of three million new trees planted.

'It's planted with a mix of Dabinett, Michelin, Browns Apple, Somerset Redsteak, Major and Harry Masters Jersey; in all, about 43,000 trees,' said Gaymers Orchard Manager Bob Chaplin. 'It is currently operating at about 30% of its anticipated capacity and will provide more top quality apples for our ciders.'



## BULMERS

After a three-year moratorium on renewing contracts that had reached their expiry date by Bulmers, the company is now inviting growers to enter into 10-year contracts.

Bulmers has also said that suppliers without contracts will have all their production accepted by the company.

General Manager Alastair King said that securing a market for the apples from



## Barry serves up a right royal

Barry Topp from New Forest Cider is used to seeing well-known faces during his eight years at London's trendy Borough Market – but he had not expected to be serving the heir to the throne.

That's what happened when the Prince of Wales and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, called in to visit the popular venue where he was to unveil a plaque.

The couple visited stalls amid a scrum of visitors

and the media, and sampled a mug of Barry's mulled cider.

Said Barry: 'The Prince and Camilla stayed at my stall for about six minutes and thoroughly enjoyed the cider. In fact, Charles remarked to Camilla, "We could have this at Highgrove sometimes".'

'He also accepted on Prince William's behalf – a selection pack of my bottled ciders – as I understood cider is his favourite tippie.'

Barry said that in the longer term he would like to have a display of other small cider makers'

# Largest independent company joins NACM

## ■ ASTON MANOR

The country's largest independent cider maker has become a member of the National Association of Cider Makers.

Founded in 1983, Birmingham-based Aston Manor Brewery has grown to become a leading producer of beers, lager and ciders. It is still in private hands, being owned solely by the Ellis Family.

'We are very pleased to welcome Aston Manor into the NACM as it greatly assists our work in representing the UK cider industry when we can demonstrate that it speaks with one voice,' said NACM chair Helen Thomas.

The company, which says it is the third largest cider producer in the UK, began cider packaging in 1987 and cider fermentation in 1996.

Over the last few years, it has invested heavily in new plant and equipment including three production packaging lines; the Cider Fermentation facility; a 15,000sq ft warehouse and

a kegging operation and a new processing building with automated processes, including a modern crossflow filtration plant.

In 2001, it formed a partnership with farmers from Hereford and Worcester by planting new orchards.

The company produces around 500,000 hectolitres of cider and perry a year, and its sister company – Highgate & Walsall Brewery – produces award-winning beers and ales for both the on and off trade.

In 1999, the company obtained the British Retail Consortium Technical Accreditation standard, which has been maintained continuously, currently

at higher status level.

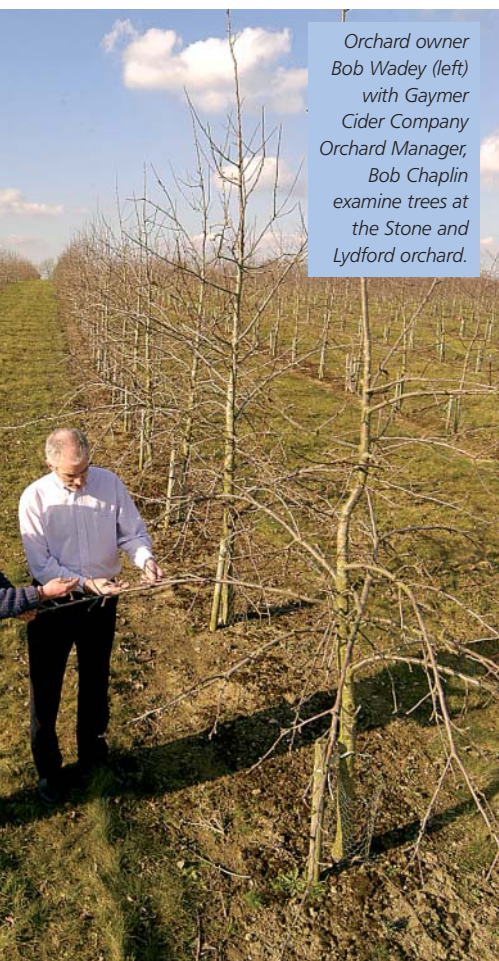
Its products include Frosty Jack's White, Kingstone Press Premium Amber, Hereford Orchard Farmhouse Dry Cider, Golden Valley Cider and Chardolini Perry.

The company has an active marketing programme including consumer/trade press, a £1/4m TV sponsorship, sports team sponsorships and a cider promotion tour.

Said Glenn Asquith, the company's sales and marketing director: 'It is encouraging to see so many premium products being brought to market. The growth of this sector, increasing greater in value than volume, demonstrates that quality is key.'



Orchard owner Bob Wadey (left) with Gaymer Cider Company Orchard Manager, Bob Chaplin examine trees at the Stone and Lydford orchard.



the numerous, traditional, standard orchards would help what was acknowledged to be an important feature in the landscape and wildlife habitat of Herefordshire and the Marches.

## tipple

products at the now famous market.

Later in the year, visitors to the market will be able to see the prize-winning cider entries from this year's Royal Bath and West Show. They will be on show at the National Fruit Show at the Kent County Showground and subsequently at Chatsworth House.

They will then move on, with other NFS produce, to Borough Market, where the Master of the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers will make the Company's annual presentation of fruit to the Lord Mayor.

# THE ACCIDENTAL

## How the real Mr Orchard stumbled into the industry

**When Keith Orchard** first saw Yewgreen Farm, it reminded him of something from an Alfred Hitchcock movie – dark, dreary and spooky.

The 200-year-old farm at Brockweir in the heart of the Wye Valley had not been lived in for 15 years, had no water supply – or any other modern conveniences for that matter. The fact that it once supplied significant quantities of cider and perry to local aficionados was not something he was aware of at the time.

The first priority was to have somewhere habitable to live, and it was not until two years later that he turned his attention to the orchard at the property.

'I knew there was an old orchard there and I had been told that the farm – then about 100 acres – used to make cider and perry, but the thought of making cider myself was not on the radar at that point,' said Keith.

When the time came, the first task was actually getting into the orchard. The undergrowth was as high as the topmost branches, among which Keith found a jumble of apple and pear trees. But, as Keith admits, he had little understanding of what was there, or what could be done with them.

'In the back of my mind I thought it would be fun to make some cider, but it became more of a focus following my move into consultancy when I started to make a bit of cider "on

the kitchen table".'

'I was aware there wasn't a local craft bottled cider available – what was being made around here was draught for farm gate sale – so I put myself on a course at Pershore and started as a hobby making a bottled cider to sell locally.

'I wanted to make good quality cider as traditionally as possible,' he said. 'I think a good cider or perry is comparable to a good wine and as versatile.'

His commitment to tradition and quality has paid off with a string of show successes that include the Supreme Champion at the Hereford Cider Museum International Cider and Perry competition in 2004, and awards from the Bath and West and Three Counties events.

Keith was also the first maker in Gloucestershire to be awarded PGI status, similar to the Appellation Controlée term used to describe wine, (see below).

And, while the reputation of his cider and perry has grown, Keith still has a busy and successful consultancy advising companies on relocating their operations and managing the process – which means some clever juggling with the diary.

Keith, who is also vice chairman of Three Counties, is putting his commitment to local traditions into

practice by concentrating his efforts on growing Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire varieties. He has replanted the existing orchard at the farm with wonderfully named varieties like Sheepsnose, Gloucestershire Killboy and Court Pendu, and acquired another orchard a short distance away.

His one indulgence has been to plant some Backwell Reds, which he discovered came from his home village in Somerset. With judicious blending, they will hopefully allow him to create a product he remembers from when he

tasted cider for the first time at, shall we say, a fairly tender age!

So, what advice does he have for anyone wishing

to follow his example?

'Go with your heart; be patient; do not rush or compromise . . . good traditional ciders, and especially perries, require more time to mature and, remember, hygiene is tops.

'Unless you make very large amounts or in an industrial style, or you are lucky enough to have access to some excellent grants – and a ready market – think carefully before giving up the day job!'

**Go with your heart;  
be patient; do not rush  
or compromise**

■ *PGI A Geographical Indication that means the name of an area used to describe a food originating from that area, having the quality and characteristics attributable to that area and/or to production in that area. Protected means the name is legally protected against, misuse, imitation, false or misleading indication, even if qualified by terms such as style.*



# CIDER MAKER



Keith's main outlet for his products is the Brockweir and Hewelsfield community-owned village shop. It was built by the villages after the original closed down and now provides an outlet for local food producers and a focal point for the community. It is run by 35 volunteers.

When he opened the shop, the Prince of Wales called it 'a triumph of community spirit'. It combines a local store with a community library and an IT suite with workstations for training and internet access, in an environmentally sustainable building.

It has become a benchmark for community-owned village shops, having been inspired to achieve social and environmental aims at the same time as making enough profit to keep the project sustainable.



# Now cider is made in Scotland

## ■ SCOTLAND

While **Scottish** consumers have long enjoyed their cider, they have been denied the opportunity to sample a glass or two of a native product – at least until now.

But all that is set to change as the ‘Peelwalls Cider and Ale Company’ has started to produce what it describes as ‘handcrafted Scottish cider’ from its base at Ayton, north of Berwick-upon-Tweed in the Scottish borders – more than 300 miles north of Hereford.

However, the raw materials do come from the West Country. Apples from Somerset are being pressed a few miles away and then used at the Ayton site, where the cider making process will take place and where they are using oak whiskey vats for fermentation.

The man behind the venture is Philip Elliott, formerly an engineering officer with the Fleet Air Arm, who was based at Yeovilton for a number of years and learned the art of cider making working on local farms.

He has been working closely on the project with his business partner and long time friend John Hazel, and business mentor Bob Randall.

‘Bob has been of immense assistance in setting up this venture, both through his hard work and dedication – and his initial investment in the project and the use of his farm buildings for our operations,’ said Philip.

He plans to enhance the image and reputation of cider among Scottish consumers by selling to local outlets and through farmers’ markets.

## Tom earns a tasty honourable mention in awards

Well done to Tom Oliver for an ‘honourable mention’ in the *Daily Telegraph* recently in their report of the Taste of Britain 2005 awards run into conjunction with Sainsbury’s.

Said the paper: ‘No ciders made the shortlist, but Oliver’s cider and perry, in Herefordshire’s orchard country, was selected for its Blakeney Red Perry.’

## New NACM website will make industry more accessible

### ■ TECHNOLOGY

The **NACM** website (at [www.cideruk.com](http://www.cideruk.com)) has been updated with several new sections added so that it is a more useful tool for members and a better resource for those intending to learn more about the industry.

The work has been managed by the Marketing and Communication Group headed by Fenella Tyler with the technical design and development provided by IT staff at Constellation Europe (the parent company of Gaymer Cider Company). The development work on behalf of Gaymer Cider

Company has been provided at no cost to the NACM.

On the new site, a raft of resources are being provided including an area for registered users (targeted at member companies and affiliates) where the latest copies of documents and other guides are available to download.

**It is a more useful tool for members and a better resource for those intending to learn more about the industry**

Another key feature will be a dedicated ‘news’ section where it is intended that, within reason, all news can be sent

through for publication. The new design also overcomes previous problems of printing sections of the site on to hard copy and the infrastructure is now more robust and capable of more frequent revision.

All of the previous content, about the history of cider, the process of cider making and orcharding has been completed revised to ensure it is relevant, interesting and informative.

Final testing and revisions were being made at the time we went to press, so look for the new site from early May. If it is not up and running when you visit, make sure you check back regularly.

# Another good show on the cards

## ROYAL BATH AND WEST

The Orchard and Cider section at the Royal Bath and West Show is fast becoming one of the principal public 'showcases' for the industry.

Held at the Shepton Mallet showground between 31 May and 3 June this year, the cider section has grown in size and stature since it began six years ago.

The growth continues again this year, with continuing support from the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, who will be staging a new display in the Orchard Tent as they celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the granting of their Charter.

For the first time last year, Royal Bath and West prize-winning ciders were displayed at the National Fruit Show at the Kent

County Showground and were subsequently on display at Chatsworth House.

A repeat is planned for October this year and, on this occasion, the exhibits will then move on, with other NFS produce, to London's Borough Market, where the Master of the Fruiterers will make the Company's annual presentation of fruit to the Lord Mayor.

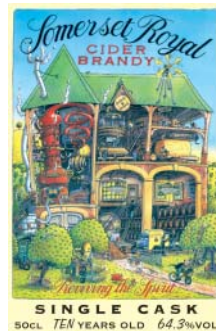
'All in all, this initiative will offer a unique opportunity for cider makers to bring their products to the attention of those living in and visiting the capital,' said Chief Steward and grower Rupert Best.

Joining the judging team for the cider and perry competitions this year is *The Financial Times* writer on food and drink, Tamasin Day Lewis.

She will be the principal judge of the Open Classes, assisted by Robert Kaufelt from the USA and Nick Bradstock from the NACM. These three will be joined by Will Sibley for the judging of the Supreme Champion Cider and the Fruiterers' Cup.

The Farmhouse Cider classes and the Pewterers' Cup will be judged by Nigel Stewart, Chairman of the South West of England Cider Makers' Association, together with Bob Cork from Gaymer Cider Company and Nicholas Bulmer, and the single Apple Juice class by Jenny Bartlett, who has judged at the National Fruit Show for several years.

Competition is again expected to be keen for the Cider Innovation award, sponsored by John Thatcher.



## CIDER BRANDY

### Eastern delight for Somerset

The fame of Somerset Cider Brandy continues to spread around the world.

After visiting Scottish distilleries, the Japanese Malt Whisky Society paid a visit to Somerset and selected a barrel of Somerset Cider Brandy, which has been specially bottled and labelled for them.

This builds on the Somerset Cider Brandy company's links with the Scots Malt Whisky Society – which has sold Somerset Cider Brandy to its worldwide membership for the past three years.

Said Managing Director Julian Temperley: 'While the sale was commercially important, the best part is the recognition that the apple and orchard traditions of Somerset was something that was marketable worldwide.'



## Weston's premium trio get a facelift

### OAK-CONDITIONED CIDER

Westons Cider's premium quality 'Oak Conditioned Cider' range has had a facelift.

Although instantly recognisable by consumers, the company felt that after 13 years the red, white and blue labels were in need of 'freshening up'.

'The changes have been evolutionary, not revolutionary,' said Roger Jackson, Commercial Director. 'It was important to

maintain product recognition while smartening up their whole appearance. We have used more of the red, white and blue in the labels to help both the consumer and the landlord identify with the Medium Dry, Extra Dry and Medium Sweet and to enhance their quality image.'

- Westons Oak Conditioned Ciders are made using exclusive and original recipes from traditional varieties of cider apples grown in the region of Much Marcle. They are fully matured in old oak vats for at least six months.

# Project will bring the past to life



A major new project to capture and record memories and knowledge of people who made cider and perry in Herefordshire has just been launched.

Until the title of 'Apples and Pears past', the project, based at the Hereford Cider Museum, started in April and lasts for nine months.

The idea came from the Museum team and is designed to 'capture' the wealth of information about cider and perry in written, oral or physical form that resides in Herefordshire and

the Borders.

One of those closely involved is Ian Standing, a trustee of the Museum, and a former museum curator.

'There are lots of records out there if you know where to look,' said Ian. 'But to most people they remain "hidden", and the plan is to collate them and make them readily accessible in a range of different ways.

'This kind of social history is very popular now and the project has already attracted a lot of interest. We have already sent out more

than 75 information packs for the roles of Project Co-ordinator, Outreach Workers and Documentation Co-ordinator!' he said.

Known as a 'community archiving project', it will use memories, voice recordings and old documents to record for posterity, people's memories of both small and large scale cider and perry making the 20th century, and all that went with it, before it is too late to do so.

The end result is stored on CDs or DVDs that people can use on their home computer

or TV. Copies will also be placed with local museums, libraries and the record office.

The Project invites and welcomes members of the cider making community, and others, to take part in the project.

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the partners in the project are the Cider Museum, The Marcher Apple Network and the Three Counties Cider and Perry Association.

If you want to take part in any way, please contact Ian on 01594 562122.

## Thatcher named for Spanish award

John Thatcher has been nominated to receive a prestigious award from the 'Fundacion de la Sidra' (Cider Foundation) of Asturias, the main cider making region of northern Spain.

This award is made annually to 'the individual or institution whose work has contributed in an exemplary and significant way to the progress and spread of the aims of the Foundation'.

This is the first time the award has gone outside Spain. John will be visiting the cider making region to receive the award in person from the President of Asturias.

A full report will be included in our next issue.

## Tesco listing for competition winner

The chance to see your cider in hundreds of Tesco stores next year is the enticing prospect if you are the winner in the cider section of the Tesco Drinks Awards.

Details are contained in the leaflet enclosed with this issue, which lays down the challenge:

'Enter a cider or ciders you are proud of.

Describe in no more than 25 words the style of cider and what makes it special.'

'This is an excellent opportunity for cider makers to gain huge exposure for their brands in the country's leading supermarket,' said Fenella Tyler, chairman of the NACM Marketing and Communications group.

'It is open to all ciders including those sold through farmers' markets and wholesalers. The only ciders not qualifying are those currently sold to companies with more than 20 retail outlets, so it opens the field very wide and we hope many of our members will

take advantage of the opportunity,' she said.

At the time of going to press, the competition website was due to go live. If when you first visit the site it is not visible then please try again later.

For details of the competition, including an application form please contact either Richard Morrice, on 08456 447665 and/or Simon Russell, at [srussell@freshwater-uk.com](mailto:srussell@freshwater-uk.com).

