

Real Ale in Ashover with a Poetic Slant

By the time you read this some of us will have already made the trip to The Old Poets' Corner at Ashover and celebrated the opening weekend of this new trad beer pub that has appeared on the circuit.

It is said that many years ago poetry and story telling actually took place at this beautiful old building, which was formerly known as the Red Lion. Quite coincidentally the landlord's previous pub also had poetic connections and that is what led to the new name. On the 4th June the Old Poets' was launched as a 'No compromise' real ale drinker's paradise.



The sign-writer's art is not lost!

Kim Beresford, former Bar & Cellar manager of 'The Dead Poet's Inn' at Holbrook (pre Everards), and festival co-ordinator / cellarman of the Rail Ale Festival at Barrow Hill has, together with wife Jackie (who is an experienced Abbot Ale drinker), taken on the pub completely free of tie.

Kim & Jackie have brought life back to this lovely old pub using the Dead Poet's relentless standards plus some of their own ideals. Kim's cellar philosophy is no nitro or keg bitters or naff fizzy ciders or insipid wines. If the beer is not spot on it goes back to the brewer not to the customer and he promises "You will always find something to suit your palate".

Always available will be Abbot and Pedigree served from the jug for a fuller flavour in the mouth. Two house ales will also be available: Ashover Gold at 3.6% and Old Poets' Ale at 4.0% - both at a reasonable £1.80 per pint. Four other hand pumps will carry rotating guests - one will always be dark beer, one will be a 'mainstream' bitter and the other two will be beer from micro breweries. Also on sale will be Fruit wines, Trad Ciders. Continental bottled beers and single malts.

Already Woolley & Archer, Crossfire, Folk Nites and Poetry sessions have livened the bar over the weekend from Fri. 4th June to Mon 7th and there are promises of more treats to come in the future.

The pub also has an intimate restaurant and there are plans for Jackie to launch the 'Lion Bistro' specialising in World Beer Cuisine.

This sounds like drinker's heaven and should become a popular watering hole, but the couple do realise that they need to hit the ground running pretty quickly after the opening weekend to sustain this level of choice and will not compromise quality for quantity. CAMRA feels that this place has the potential to really make the grade, so get up there and drink the beer. Don't lose it, use it!

Opening hours are 12:00 to 2:30 & 5:00 to 11:00 Monday to Thursday and all day Friday to Sunday.

One Last Thing... The cellar is massive with four good-sized rooms. Says Kim, "Wouldn't it be nice to but a brewing plant in one of them"!!!