



Edition 7

10th November 2016

FRIENDS *of* WARMINSTER MALTINGS

ON THE TRAIL OF THE SPIRIT



Sunday 2nd October was a special day at the maltings with a visit from the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts Club www.rrec.org.uk who mostly arrived in their wonderful vintage and classic models of the famous marque.

Part of the object of their tour of our maltings was to precede a visit to the new Cotswold Distillery, near Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire. www.cotswolddistillery.com. Our visitors thought it was logical to understand the first part of the process, the conversion of barley into malt (which we supply to the Cotswold Distillery), before embarking on their tour of the distillery, from where Whisky, Gin and other contemporary spirits are attracting high acclaim.

You might sum it up as the Spirits of Ecstasy in pursuit of the spirits of barley, but it has given me a new idea for 2017. We might call it “The Warminster Whisky Trail”. The “Trail” would begin, of course, with a visit to our maltings, followed by a visit to a brewery, finishing up with a visit to a distillery. All we need to do is team up with a handful of collaborators. Watch this space.

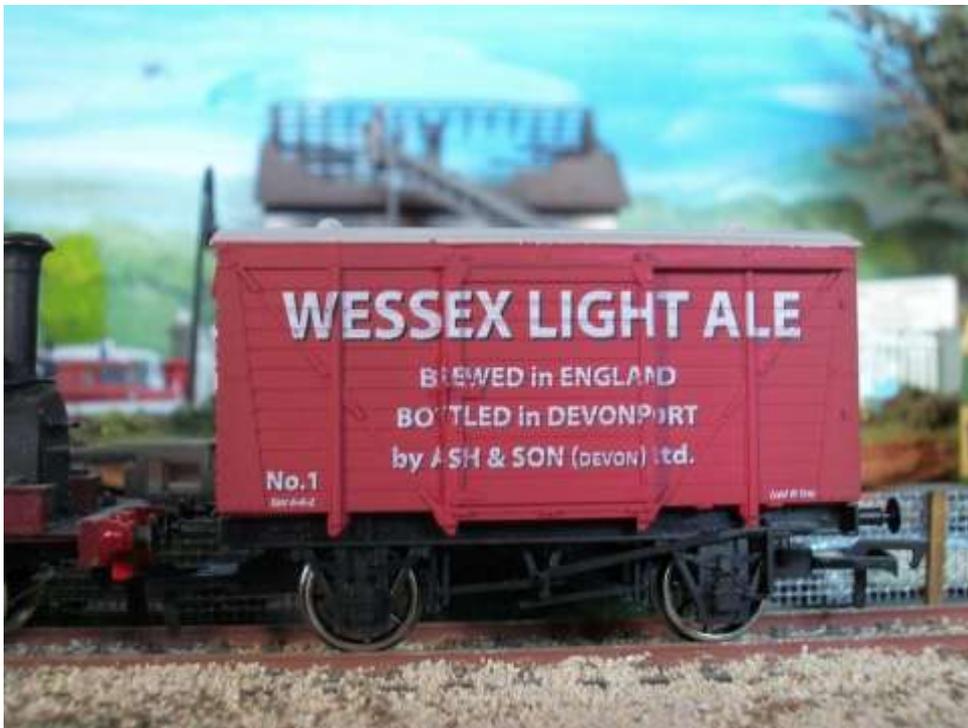
CALLING ALL RAILWAY MODELLERS

We are talking about OO Gauge!

A few weeks ago we were contacted by the Burnham-on-Sea Model Railway Club who make and sell models of early to mid 20th century rolling stock (the days of steam), authentically liveried (with a little bit of artistic licence, if required) to reflect commercial freight that patronised the railway network at the time. They make these models in batches of 140 units per design, and sell them at around £15 each, **all the money raised going to charity.**

If you view their website www.burnhamanddmrc.org 'Wagons Sold Page 1' etc. their catalogue is substantial, and apparently all models sell out very quickly, so their fund raising initiative is both highly successful and effective.

Something else you glean from their catalogue is that they are heavily into breweries, more past than present, so I suppose it is not surprising that they have now caught up with a glaring omission from the 'supply chain', a maltster's liveried wagon, which is why they have approached us at Warminster.



Wessex Light Ale firm in Devon, A run of 120 **SOLD OUT**
All proceeds been given to BARB – Burnham Area Rescue Boat

We have already approved the artwork for a 1950's Warminster Maltings Ltd liveried 'Grain Hopper' wagon, which could be available in time for Christmas. British Railways ran these wagons finished in pale grey or charcoal, I remember, I was there(!) so we have opted for the latter with white lettering. When these have sold out, they will be followed by an earlier wagon, described as a 'Vent Van', capable of conveying barley and malt in sacks. This will be liveried in the name of E.S.Beaven (Maltings) Ltd, the trading title of our maltings from 1947 to 1994.

With around £2,000 going to a good cause from each of the above models, we are delighted to have been chosen to be part of this admirable and enterprising initiative. And if the demand exceeds supply, based on our archives, we will help the Burnham-on-Sea Club to create further models liveried in the names of maltsters past, so that our sector eventually begins to line up with all those brewery wagons!

FORK HANDLES (FOUR CANDLES)

Do you remember this famous TV sketch performed by the brilliantly funny two Ronnies, Barker and Corbett? Back in September I had a similar conversation in Warminster Engraving, a shop in the town www.warminsterengraving.co.uk . I was enquiring whether they could help me by engraving Fork Handles, a dozen replicas of the wooden forks last used by our former maltsters more than 60 years ago.

It was 10 years ago or so when a near neighbour of ours on Pound Street, knocked on the front door of the maltings and offered us an original example of a maltsters fork. It had been sat in his garden shed for as long as he could remember, and he thought we should have it. We were delighted to accept.



Original example on the left

Then we had the idea of having some replicas made, but who to turn to for such a project? The answer: Rudds Rake Factory in Dufton, Cumbria, founded in 1890. Run today by John Rudd, 4th generation, they work only with the traditional raw materials, ash and silver birch, and make 10,000 wooden rakes every year for sale through garden centres. Mr Rudd very kindly agreed to help us, so we boxed up our original example, sent it to him, and just two weeks later we received 12 perfect replicas.

We have had them engraved, and now they will be distributed to brewery customers to hang on the wall of their Visitor Centres, a unique badge of quality that is Warminster Malt!

LAST TOURS OF 2016



Mair Arthur (centre above) runs the very traditional and charming White Cross Inn, Groeswen, close to Cardiff www.thewhitecrossinn.co.uk and at the end of October, Mair brought a party of her 'regulars' for a tour of our maltings. Imagine their delight as they walked through our pack-house to see two separate pallets of malt destined to two breweries in Wales, both of whose beers are served in their pub. It was not stage managed, I can assure you, we are not that well informed, but the tour immediately had even more meaning than perhaps originally imagined.

So our latest 2016 tour ended on a very pleasingly high note, particularly as we thought it was the last tour of the year....until an e-mail arrived a couple of days ago, from a party of Dutchmen looking forward to passing by on their way to the Somerset Festival. With 'Brexit' in mind, we will be very happy to receive them.

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