

The Worcester Wassail

1300hrs – 20th December 2014

WAX – Ten Year Anniversary

Wassail - pron: \WAH-sul

Def: "A festivity characterized by much drinking.
To celebrate noisily, often indulging in drinking;
engage in uproarious festivities."



1. The Cap 'n' Gown

Turn right out of Foregate Street railway station and walk under the bridge. The pub is ten minutes up the road on the left, just past the school. Established in 1849 and, up until a few years ago, little had changed (except hopefully the odd barrel). There was a dodgy do-up a few years ago but the good news is they've reworked the old girl since, put in some new furniture and have produced a cosy boozer. Don't get too cosy though – even if two foot of snow does fall again whilst we're here - we're only just getting started. Let's try to pull Bob away from the football screens and move on.

Toast – "Civitas in Bello et Pace Fidelis - The City faithful in war and in peace".

2. The Lamb and Flag

Stay on this side of the road and head back in the direction of the railway station and you'll find this pub opposite St. Oswald's Road. The Lamb has had a recent spruce up but this has always been a proper pub that's as famous for its impeccably kept Guinness as it is for its staring / starring locals, forgive them they probably haven't seen a new face in here in a few years. We're now recognised here which makes us able to stare at anyone new too. Whatever you do don't challenge anyone to a game of conkers - they have a regular pub competition. Don't be late as this pub is so old fashioned it still exercises lunchtime opening hours (never mind 24-hour drinking this place can't manage 12 hours) and you won't want to miss out on this gem.

Toast – "A fine beer may be judged with only one sip, but it's better to be thoroughly sure".

3. The Dragon Inn

Five minutes further up the Tything and you'll find a 1750s, Grade II listed, CAMRA pub that you won't need to be dragoned inn-to. See the blackboard for today's specials – these are not your meal specials but rather a list of banned conversation topics. Exercise care as one of the banned topics is usually 'the banned topics' – so this guide is probably banned just by virtue of its discussion of the banned topics. This board is the genius solution to the problem of nobody wanting to directly tell some boring bastard regular that he/she were boring everybody. WARNING – the website states there is no parking at the pub but if you've brought your car you deserve everything you get... if you do get desperate for transport there is a handy bus stop next to the toilet - last stop Shitsville.

Toast – "Everybody should believe in something -- I believe I'll have another drink".

45 Upper Tything

30 The Tything

51 The Tything

4. The Saracen's Head

Across the road in the same direction is our final pub on the Tything. An old coaching house, which seems to have changed hands again after a long spell run by a friendly, rugby loving, South African couple whose only fault was they didn't like the f____ rude language – so mind your c____ mouth! So there we have it, we HAVE met a nice South African. Phil and Steve hold the world record for the world's longest and shittiest game of darts in here risking both the timing and success of the Wassail and Russ's eyes in the process.

Toast – “Drinkers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your money, your woman, your liver, your kids, your sanity, your job....”

5. The Paul Pry

Now the Wassail purists will expect to find lover's action in Lowesmoor here. After years of enduring the Pig and Drum and a disappointing stop in the Firefly (Russ is never disappointed to get in and out alive mind) we've binned it. Just because the chippy is so damn good most of will likely take a side trip though (ask for “the special”, twice the food, half the price and - probably so they remain in business - this is also apparently now only available on the QT so secret greasy handshake at the ready). For our fifth pub we go “up The Butts” (turn right off Foregate onto Shaw Street and carry on up). It reopened in 2013 and features a mahogany bar, majolica style tiling and terrazzo flooring – the challenge is to say that sentence out loud, this far into the Wassail, without spitting. Some of the interior is described as 'nationally important' and dates from 1901. Strangely the pub is only open 12-8pm., the bloke from the Lamb and Flag could moonlight here without anyone noticing.

Toast – “There are only two times when I drink beer, when I'm alone and when I'm with someone else”.

6. The King Charles II

Head back to Foregate, turn right and then left onto Shaw Street. Follow this down until New Street, a small turning on the right near the car park. Those who have travelled from the North are rewarded with Pieminister pies just like the King himself used to eat (possibly). If memory serves correctly King Charles II is famous for scratching Oliver Cromwell's copy of a famous punk LP, he then had to flee to France as Cromwell was so outraged. We've walked past this place for years as it was a restaurant when the Wassail was first compiled but has since seen the error its ways. Despite this place being named after a loser it features giant pork scratchings, pies and real ale – long live the loser, runaway King!

Toast – “Here's to the King! What King? Fuc-King!”

7. The Swan With Two Nicks

Located next door is a nice looking pub with a good range of ales and authentic ciders. Its downside is they do insist on blaring music through a wholly inadequate, knackered PA. I wouldn't bother sticking money into the video jukebox – if you do, expect to wait two hours to hear your selection and, as we'll probably be behind schedule at this point, you won't make yourself too popular. Upstairs is the Lunar Bar where the décor is akin to a cross between a tart's boudoir and a scene from the third rate film Austin Powers!

Toast – “To alcohol! The cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems.” Homer Simpson

8. Eagle Vaults

Continue up New Street and you'll find Eagle Vaults on the corner of Pump Street and New Street (which further on becomes Friar Street). Despite Waffle's campaign we return to the Eagle Vaults for 2014 in the vain hope they might have another ace, brummie, rockabilly

4 Tything

6 The Butts

29 New Street

28 New Street

2 Friar Street

band on. Clad in traditional Victorian tiles on the outside – the vomit just wipes off them – the Victorians really did think of everything (except how to catch Jack the Ripper and to not die of TB).

Toast – “Be one who drinks the finest of ales. Every day without fail. Even when you have drank enough, Remember that ale is wonderful stuff!”

9. Farriers Arms

Now comes an opportunity to show off your nine-pint, eight-ball skills at one of the oldest pubs in town. Take a left out of the pub and head up Pump Street onto High Street. Take a left on High Street and Fish Street is the next right (opposite JJB Sports - other sports retailers are available - some even sell more than trainers!), the pub is 100 yards from the High Street. Resist the temptation to double up on pints here as people are beginning to struggle and whilst not the greatest pub on the Wassail a worthy stop nevertheless.

Toast – “Beer makes you feel the way you ought to feel without beer”.--Henry Lawson.

10. The Plough

Continue to the end of Fish Street and on the left-hand corner you'll find the Worcester CAMRA pub of the year 2009. New to the Wassail in 2010 due to the sad (?) demise of the Pig & Drum and now one a firm favourites (except the one year Phil was in charge when it was questionably omitted). It's a bit pokey but very friendly so you might want to quietly slope out of the Farriers when nobody is looking to secure your pint with a seat and to claim ownership of the pub quiz trivia books!

Toast – “I'd rather be with the people in this room, than with the finest people in the world! - Fred Willard in the film "Roxanne”

11. The Cardinal's Hat

Head left out of the Plough on Deansway and then on the left hand side of the roundabout you'll meet Eddie Elgar - quick photee and then next left up Friar Street. Nearly there!! Now the purists have reason to scoff as this Austrian themed bar serves half litres – yes, this is a twelve pint pub crawl – improvise! Those (still) with a death wish may wish to consider the five-litre stein and as a half-litre is technically smaller than a pint we should all consider this option*. Great heated outdoor area for chatting up the laydeez should you manage to identify one in amongst all the beer guts (PC note - laydeez may also have beer guts).

* Please, when drinking irresponsibly, be responsible.

Toast – “To alcohol - because no great story ever started with someone eating salad”.

12. Heroes

Continue up Friar Street and on the left, keep your blurry eyes peeled for a free-standing sign for Heroes – there is a small doorway with a set of stairs you can fall down later. Watch your head and Jae R. Moggs* projectile vomit stains as you enter. This place has its fair share of nooks and grannies and seems popular with the Worcestershire yooof. Steve smooth talked his way out of being thrown out twice a few years ago despite only being guilty of standing next to an abusive drunk, ironic really as he'd spent all day with a large group of them. Once you've drunk your giant bottle of ale it's on to a club or to fall over in the street clutching a “quick” chicken burger. At this stage manners and decency have probably caught that previously mentioned bus to Shitsville.

* Names have been changed to protect the guilty party's career prospects

Toast – “Here's to being Single, Drinking Doubles... and seeing Triple!”