

Maldon Gold (3.8 per cent) and fell in love with it. "If we'd produced golden beers years ago, we might not have had lager," Boyce said as we took our seats.

My other dining companion was Vic Beale, a life member of CAMRA and a self-confessed real ale lover and expert. Vic and I are planning a visit to the Westerham Brewery in Kent shortly and I'll be writing all about it in a future issue of the magazine.

There were, of course, other people at the banquet and they were all club members, male and female, as you can see from the photographs accompanying this write-up.

Large, thick flickering candles dribbling wax lent a medieval feel to the evening and the food on offer was good and traditional. In total there were three courses and each one was prepared using beer as an ingredient, courtesy of John Boyce and Mighty Oak.

The starter was Simply the Best paté with chutney and melba toast. Simply the Best is a beer produced by Mighty Oak. It is produced using Maris Otter Pale and Crystal malts and Willamette and Progress hops and is described as having a 'deliciously fragrant nose and a crisp, light, but distinctive bitterness, which is fresh and clean on the palate'.

The starter was accompanied by Marble Pint, produced by the Marble Brewery (www.marblebeers.co.uk) based in Manchester.

The main course was fantastic: pork, lemongrass and ginger ale sausages with mustard mash. The sausages had a special ingredient, Ginger Ale from a Derbyshire brewer called Leatherbitches (<http://leatherbitches.co.uk>) and gravy made from Mighty Oak's Oscar Wilde mild, a 'nutty, moreish dark mild'.

The beer accompanying the main course was Bespoke



A good night was had by all - check out the smiling faces!

from the Leatherbitches brewery. Clubs wanting to try this 5.0 per cent abv brew would be well advised to contact Eddy, the man behind the beer, on 07976 279253.

We moved on to dessert and a Black Hole Porter

Chocolate Pudding with a raspberry cider jelly. The chocolate pudding was made using Black Hole Porter from Oakham Ales (www.oakhamales.com) based in Peterborough. The cider jelly was made using Magic Bus >



From the left: John Boyce, Matt Moggridge of Club Mirror and Vic Beale - three men who know what they like when it comes to real ale