

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BRITAIN'S BEST SURPRISE

THE NORTHAMPTON BREWERY TRAIL

Origins of microbreweries in Northampton. With thanks to Alaric Neville, Phipps NBC.

Northamptonshire has a long history of brewing. Ale was the staple drink from medieval times until the quality of the water supply improved. Beer was brewed at home and by brew pubs until these sources of production declined in the 1890s and were replaced by breweries.

These larger breweries began to take over the smaller ones so that in 1906 there were 24 breweries in Northamptonshire, but only 8 in 1940 and 6 in 1960. One of the last ones was Phipps Northampton Brewing Company, and this company was the largest brewery in the Midlands and one of the largest companies in Northampton.

Bill Urquhart was the last head brewer at Phipps Street Brewery prior to its closure and demolition when the site was handed to Carlsberg by the company's owners at the time, Whatney Mann. Bill had been unable to convince Watneys to modernise the brewery so he produced detailed plans to set up a small traditional brewery. Bill knew there was continuing demand for locally brewed ales with character and flavour. Local landlords had protested about the axing of Phipps IPA and other hand pulled ales but the big brewer would not listen. Bill continued to experiment with recipes and techniques.



The Bridge Street brewery closed in 1974 and Bill started a small new brewery in a barn behind his home. Litchborough was the first modern microbrewery in the County, establishing the model which has spread around the world. Bill ran courses and encouraged enthusiasts from his base in Litchborough.



If you are interested in visiting the wide range of microbreweries and distilleries across Northamptonshire, see further information below. Brewery and distillery tours are often available.

HART FAMILY BREWERS

hartfamilybrewers.com

JELLEY DISTILLERIES

jelleydistilleries.co.uk

MAULE BREWING CO

maulebrewing.com

NENE VALLEY BREWERY

www.nenevalleybrewery.com

NOBBY'S BREWERY

nobbysbrewery.co.uk

PHIPPS NBC

www.phipps-nbc.co.uk

TOWCESTER MILL BREWERY

www.towcestermillbrewery.co.uk

WARNER EDWARDS

www.warneredwards.com

