

## Stroud

Here we are in a market town on the edge of the Cotswolds whose earlier prosperity was based on products made from the wool from local sheep. There is still some residual cloth manufacture, including baize for snooker tables and felt for tennis balls. (“Have you got felt for balls, missus?”)

Out of the station on the “up” side, glance to your right to see Brunel’s Goods Shed. Then walk past, on your right, the **Imperial Hotel** (of which more later), turn right into Russel Street and along on the right is the **Lord John** (Wetherspoons) with their ever-changing range (two of which, as often is the case, were “coming soon” when we visited). Suggest we have the first round here and linger till 1145

Out of the ‘spoons, turn left then right along King Street, then left and down Gloucester Street to find, down the hill, the **Queen Victoria** (which had four interesting pumps on – Cambrinus (Liverpool) Endurance, Great Orme Welsh Black, Dangerfield’s Monkey House, and Sunny Republic (Dorset) Shark Head. 1150-1220

Out and right back up the slope, across King Street and continue up the High Street then left across the high Street into Church Street to the **Retreat** on the right. A bit wine-bar’ish but stocks Otter plus one guest – Elmers from Flying Monk Brewery on the second recce made it worthwhile (also does food). 1225-1255

Out and left back to the High Street, then zigzag right then left across into Union Street.. Down there until, on the right, we reach John Street where you’ll see the **Ale House** diagonally opposite you with seven pumps on when we were there initially and six on the second visit. We would also suggest eating here – Phil recommends the Bubble & Squeak, and Tim managed to wolf down a doorstep BLT sandwich served with salad and a handful of crisps, though table service can be extremely slow, but there should be enough variety of drink to pass the time. 1300-1400

When we do leave turn left and follow John Street down to the main road, make a right and you will come into Russell Street again to pass the ‘spoons on your left. Then make a left back towards the station and, with time to spare, we can dodge into the **Imperial Hotel** on the left (Doom Bar, Hobgoblin and Stroud Brewery Budding). 1410-end.

*(Stroud is as hilly as anywhere in the Welsh Valleys but, in the interest of trying to add another pub to the list, I clambered down and up and back again to try the **Clothiers Arms**, which, according to a display in the bar is located at 51 degrees 44 minutes 54.5 seconds North, 2 degrees 13 minutes 35 seconds West, but the St Austell Tribute, Butcombe Bitter and Stroud Tom Long hardly make it worth the hike.*

*Another option, for anyone interested, would be to break away before the end and catch a train to Kemble and visit the **Tavern**. It was half-day closed when I visited so*

*I never got inside but, from the view of the three pumps through the window, it is an Arkells-only establishment. I doubt that I will put myself out to visit again! )*