

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Spring 2011 **FREE**



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



Women and
Real Ale
the
Liverpool
Way

CAMRA 40th

Top 4 Pubs

MerseyRAle

Isle of Man News
Page 37



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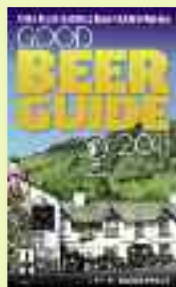
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THE LION TAVERN

www.liontavern.com

67 Moorfields Liverpool L2 2BP Telephone 0151 236 1734

The Lion Tavern (Grade II Listed) is Liverpool's finest Edwardian Pub. It is an extravaganza of etched glass, carved wood and beautiful tiling. It has a wonderful ornate wood carved bar plus two cosy side rooms one with a fantastic stained glass dome. The Lion Tavern is an award winning pub serving excellent cask conditioned ales, cider and a large selection of the finest malt whiskies. You can also enjoy a fine selection of tasty food from our new menu.



8 HANDPUMPS

supply a varied selection of prize winning Real Ales (including at least one locally brewed ale) plus hand pulled Cider

OVER 80 MALT WHISKIES

The Lion Tavern has one of the largest selections of malt whisky on Merseyside



WEEKLY LOCALE
See Board for future
Real Ales



Sean and Michael would like to welcome customers old and new to the Lion Tavern

FOOD

See the board for selection of good value food from our new menu

QUIZ NIGHT

every Tuesday at 9.30pm

BOARD GAME CLUB

Meet every Monday at 6.00pm

ACOUSTIC NIGHT

Second Thursday of the Month 8pm

BOB DYLAN SOCIETY

Meets first Thursday of the Month 8.30pm

MEET THE BREWER

Third Thursday of the Month 8pm

POETRY GET TOGETHER

Fourth Thursday of the Month 8pm

V6 Adventure Club

Meet every Wednesday at 8.00pm



"One of the Hundred Best Pubs in the country"
Daily Telegraph

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool and Districts Branch

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Cover: CAMRA Womens tasting evening, The Dispensary
Picture by Neil Lloyd

The opinions expressed in MerseyAle are not necessarily those of the Editor, the CAMRA Liverpool Branch or CAMRA Ltd.

Welcome to MerseyAle



Life begins at Forty. Well that's what they say and CAMRA is about to put it to the test.

CAMRA celebrated 40 years of successful campaigning on 16th March (page 4 and 19).

Thanks to the efforts of CAMRA it can be said that real ale has been saved from the threat it faced in the 1960s and 70s of imminent extinction. People Power stopped the Big Six Brewers in their tracks. CAMRA has since gone on to be acclaimed as the most successful consumer organisation in Europe.

However Forty is a time to look forward not just back

Whilst the battle for real ale may have been largely won, two new battlegrounds now loom large, and Liverpool CAMRA is rising to the challenge;

First – the Battle for the very survival of the British pub.

Around 29 pubs are closing every week with pubs facing a perfect storm of economic recession and cheap supermarket alcohol. Yet Real Ale is the unique selling point of the British Pub. Only in the pub can you enjoy real ale from the cask. Equally no pubs means no where to drink real ale. Real Ale is an important economic advantage for the pub. Liverpool CAMRA has worked hard to promote our pubs.

- The annual Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival and Pubs Passport, which runs through September and October, features over 80 real ale pubs.
- The title Liverpool Real Ale Pubs

Capital of Britain draws visitors and leaves them in no doubt about the national quality of our pubs.

Second - Bringing new people to real ale.

CAMRA needs to introduce the new generations of people to real ale and to real pubs so as to secure the future of both.

Liverpool CAMRA has developed a **Bringing New People to Real Ale campaign.**

Events are being organised to introduce **Women and Real Ale** (page 11 and 12). It may not be appreciated that national figures show that it is women who are driving real ale growth (page 10).

Running in parallel is a programme to Introduce **Young People to Real Ale.** CAMRA needs to build the next generation of real ale drinkers. Liverpool CAMRA has a new Young Persons officer Chris Flynn who is organising the programme and can be contacted on youngpersons@merseycamra.org.uk

The lesson of the last 40 years is clear and applies equally to the next 40

Don't Agonise – Organise !!

So let's make a difference. Don't delay – Join CAMRA today – page 53.



John Armstrong Editor



CAMRA Celebrates 40 Years of Real Ale Success

Now the Battleground Shifts to Saving the British Pub

The Campaign for Real Ale is celebrating 40 years of success in campaigning for real ale, during which time it has become recognised as Europe's leading consumer organisation with over 120,000 members.

Now forty years on the battle for real ale may be largely won but the new battle ground has shifted to the very survival of the British Pub. Currently nationwide 29 pubs are closing every week and this iconic British institution is under threat as never before.

Geoff Edwards Chair of the Liverpool and Districts Branch which was launched in 1974 commented;

"It is fair to say that without CAMRA real ale, Britain's national drink, would have disappeared under a tide of fizzy keg beers which the big brewers heavily promoted through the 60s and 70s. CAMRA has been the most successful example to date of people power stopping big business in its tracks and forcing them to retreat from their "one size fits all" policy."

In 1971 real ale looked set for extinction as brewer after brewer switched to easy to keep pasteurised long life fizzy keg beer. Most notorious was the national advertising campaign for Watney's Keg Red Barrel which looked set to

be forced down the throats of the nation's drinkers.

Then four friends from the North West of England Michael Hardman, Graham Lees, Bill Mellor and Jim Makin resolved to challenge the loss of Britain's traditional cask beers. The result was the establishment of the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale which was soon renamed as the more catchy Campaign for Real Ale. The title Real Ale was born.

By 1973 membership had leapt to a remarkable 5,000 and the next year 1974 it had nearly doubled to 9,000 with the first local Branches established. Merseyside CAMRA branch was set up in January 1974 at a meeting in the Globe pub Cases Street.

The organisation rapidly became known for its vigorous campaigning at both national and local levels.

The first edition of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide described Watney's Red Barrel as "avoid like the plague," which after a threat of legal action by Watney's led to a rewording to "avoid at all costs." The inevitable result of this heavy handed censorship by Watney's was massive media coverage for the underdog, CAMRA, and the campaign was well and truly on its way on a tide of national publicity.

From a situation in 1971 when there were 170 breweries by 2010 that number had rocketed to 767 as the demand for real ale generated an explosion in the number of micro breweries across every part of Britain.

In Liverpool City Centre there were just NINE real ale pubs listed in the 1974 Good Beer Guide whilst in the 2011 edition there are 24, testament to the Real Ale Revival led by CAMRA.

The Battle for Real Ale may have been won but now a new battle looms. The Battle for the British Pub.

Geoff Edwards comments, "The very survival of a great British institution, the British Pub is at stake. Currently pubs are closing at the rate of 29 per week. Pubs are facing a perfect storm of economic recession and greedy PubCos who are demanding unrealistically high rents and charging well over the odds for beer.

There is a need for government action to curb the powers of the PubCos and to back community locals. The Prime Minister claims to be leading a pub friendly government. CAMRA says let him prove it."

A national survey by CAMRA shows that 84% of people believe a pub is as essential to village life as a shop or post office. Pubs are central to the social and community life of their local areas and their closure can rip the heart out of a community leaving people with nowhere to meet or enjoy social activities.

CAMRA – the Chester Connection

There is a common belief that CAMRA was founded whilst Michael Hardman, Bill Mellor, Graham Lees, journalists from the Liverpool and Manchester areas, and Jim Makin who worked for a brewery in Salford, were on holiday in Ireland. What is not widely realised is that the seeds of what was to become the Campaign for Real Ale were sown in CHESTER during a pub crawl prior to leaving for Ireland.

Michael Hardman records in his book **Called to the Bar** that;

"The first time the four of us came together was in March 1971, when we gathered in Chester on the evening before we were due to fly off to Ireland on a seven-day boozing holiday organised by Lees. All of us were under 25 and fond of a few pints.

As we traipsed from pub to pub and finally to the compulsory

Indian restaurant, we developed a consensus of complaint of the lousy quality of much of the beer we had drunk. "Too fizzy" said Mellor. "No character" said Makin. "Too dear" said Lees. "Tastes sickly" said I."

"Almost a year later, our Irish holiday now a fond memory, Lees and I were doing the rounds of pubs in Chester again when Lees became uncharacteristically serious. 'You know, Hardman', he

said with wrinkled brow and screwed up eyes 'we should get this CAMRA business going as a proper consumer campaign instead of just bugging about singing 'We're Only Here for the Ale'"

Enter the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale, soon to be memorably renamed the Campaign for Real Ale. The rest is history.

Greg Mulholland congratulates CAMRA on 40 years of campaigning

including guest beer rights and a genuine free of tie option.

- Thirdly proper recognition, through taxation, of the importance of beer and of pubs.

Greg commented:

"The campaigning work done by CAMRA has been remarkable and they are rightly regarded as one of the most successful consumer campaigns ever in this country. Without CAMRA, we would not have the huge variety of stunning beer we enjoy in this country.

"I am delighted to table a motion to ensure that CAMRA receive the acknowledgement they deserve in Parliament for their sterling work over the past 40 years, in campaigning to first save then champion real ale and working to preserve the great British pub.

"I am delighted that they have no intention of resting on their laurels and I know that they will continue to lead the fight for real beer as a great national drink and for pubs as the proper place to enjoy it and look forward to continuing to work with them in the Save the Pub and Beer Groups in parliament"

National Chairman of CAMRA, Colin Valentine, commented:



Liberal Democrat MP, Chair of the All-Party Save the Pub Group and long time campaigner for the British pub, Greg Mulholland, has congratulated CAMRA, on the organisations 40th anniversary by tabling a Parliamentary Early Day Motion commending them on reaching this milestone and what they have achieved in this time.

At CAMRA's annual Parliamentary reception, National Chairman of CAMRA, Colin Valentine, the Community Pubs Minister, Bob Neill and Greg Mulholland MP, all took the opportunity to congratulate CAMRA members for their campaigning work and their successes over the past 40 years.

At the reception, with Bob Neill present, Greg also laid out three key issues that we must see a result on in 2011;

- Firstly greater protection for pubs in planning law ensuring planning permission is required for demolition and change of use.
- Secondly reform of the beer tie

"We are immensely proud of reaching the grand old age of forty and not only to have survived but to be going from strength to strength as we battle to preserve a beer style virtually unique to the United Kingdom.

"They say that life begins at 40. We intend to stick to that and to keep on campaigning for what we believe in.

"Some people say the battle is won and we should wind down. Not with the assault on well run community pubs from both the tax man and the supermarkets continuing. We are in it for the long haul."

The EDM wording

Congratulates CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, on reaching their 40th Anniversary this year; notes that CAMRA now has over 120,000 individual consumer members; believes that the size of their membership illustrates the continues and growing importance of real ale and well-run pubs within our communities; welcomes their work in speaking up for community pubs, small brewers and consumer rights; and hopes that their success continues.



THE DISPENSARY

CAMRA Pub of the Year 2010

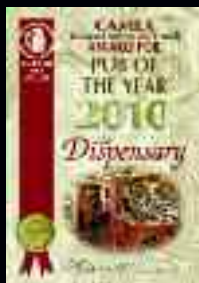


Dispensary - Supporting Local Beers



The Dispensary provides a varied and interesting selection of real ales from the best Micro Brewers in the country. You will be surprised at the choice

A Warm Welcome to the Dispensary (CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Pub of the Year 2010) from Pauline, Dave and all their staff



8 Handpulls serving Cask Ales and traditional Cloudy Cider

RENSHAW STREET, LIVERPOOL
(Formerly The Grapes) 0151 709 2160



Yet More New Outlets for Real Ale in Liverpool

The wave of new real ale outlet openings continues, demonstrating the market strength of real ale in the city.

The Hub Alehouse and Kitchen Casartelli Building, 12 Hanover Street, City Centre



The Hub is a combination of a bar, pub, gastropub and restaurant featuring four hand pumped real ales. Business partners Mark Friend and Steve Slater who own the three Pierre French bistros in the city centre have had backing from the Royal Bank of Scotland to launch their new venture the Hub in the Casartelli Building at the John Lewis end of Hanover Street.

The Grade 2 listed Casartelli Building is in fact a remarkable reconstruction of the original 1760 structure. The Casartelli building

falling into disrepair and becoming the focus of the Liverpool Echo Stop the Rot campaign to save threatened buildings. The building partially collapsed in October 2000 and its future looked bleak, but in January 2002 it was announced an exact replica of the building was to be built on site. This opened in 2007 with a 34 room apartment hotel on the upper floors.

The Hub occupies the whole of the ground floor giving a large open plan space accommodating around 160 people, which is divided into four seating areas, some for eating and some for drinking. There is a mixture of seating and table styles. Décor is cream with a polished wood floor and exposed brick walls with feature cabinets displaying bottled beers. The ceiling is grey with exposed metal ducting

The L shaped bar features four hand pumps serving four real ales which change every month. Initial examples were **Lancaster Brewery Amber and Blond, Liverpool Organic Brewery beers and Greene King Abbott**. The bottled beer range is a limited range of Usual Suspects world beers.



takes its name from the Italian family who ran a scientific instrument manufacturing business from there. Later it became a wine warehouse before

There is an extensive range of food, with light bites served 12 to 4.30 and a full menu throughout the day, which includes dishes such as game and fish pies, braised oxtail, pork belly, steak burgers and Welsh Black steaks. Sunday roasts are served 12 to 4.30pm. Breakfasts and Brunch are served weekends 9am to 2pm. The Hub is already very busy especially for food.

Opening times are Mon to Weds 12 to 11pm; Thurs and Fri 12 to 12; Sats 9am to midnight; Suns 9am to 11.

The BierKeller World Beer Bar Stanley Street/Dale Street corner City Centre
www.liverpoolkeller.com



Special Discount Offer for CAMRA Members

The Bierkeller is offering a 20 pence discount on a pint of real ale and 10 pence on a half to card carrying CAMRA members on production of the CAMRA card.

Special joint BierKeller and Liverpool CAMRA Event Thursday 12th May 8pm

An evening event for Young People and new CAMRA members to enjoy a selection of real ales and some live acoustic music in the cavern basement room at the BierKeller.

This cellar bar opened in July 2010 and was one of a wave of new bars in the city centre making a feature of selling real ale. Owners Carolyn Russell and Dave Parry are enthusiasts for real ale and are keen to develop the range on offer. The BK is free of tie and Carolyn and Dave will take full advantage of being free to choose the beers they want to stock.

Initially the name Bierkeller and the launch publicity may have led to the impression that the bar was primarily a German lager beers bar rather than also a real ale bar. The initially slow sales of the real ales

Welcome to the **Vernon Arms** www.vernonarms.co.uk

Cheers from Jimmy and Barbara Monaghan
The Vernon Arms, Dale Street, Liverpool

6 Handpumps (4 Ever-changing)
Regulars: Rev James & Johnnie Handsome

- Guest Ciders
 - Big screen football
 - Belgian bottled beers
 - Private functions
 - Food Mon-Thurs 12-7pm, Fri-Sun 12-4pm
 - catered (Lathom Lounge)
 - 10% student discount
- Check out Great Meal Deals **off food menu**



The Vernon Arms offers all of the above in a friendly and safe atmosphere plus:
Live entertainment Friday and Saturday

Opening Times Mon-Thurs 11-11.30pm; Fri & Sat 11.30-2am depending on customer demand; Sun 12-11pm Tel: 0151 236 6132

The **Caledonia** *Refurbished Georgian Quarter Community Pub*

4 HANDPUMPS

*Taylor's Golden Best
plus 3 changing Guest Beers from Micro and Regional Breweries*

LIVE MUSIC

Loose Moose Bluegrass
Sundays fortnightly at 8pm

**GOOD VALUE
HOME COOKED
FOOD**

**FUNCTION
ROOM**
Available for hire



Catharine Street Tel 0151 708 0235 Open 12 – 11 Sun – Thurs; 12 -12 Fri and Sat
Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/caledonialiverpool

affected the beer quality, and this in turn deterred customers from asking for the real ales.

However Carolyn and Dave are made of the right real ale stuff and were determined to preserve and develop the real ale offering. The beer quality has been attended to and recent tastings have recorded



very good standards. Interesting beers from micro breweries around the country are being sourced including the likes of **Thornbridge, Brew Dog, Blakemere and Liverpool One.**

Another issue being addressed is the lack of real ale publicity at the entrance to the bar. A pavement "A" board and a blackboard will announce the names of the guest real ales and at the bar there will be a board listing the guest ales with tasting notes. New table beer menus with tasting notes are planned for May, plus more visible promotion of the real ales.

New developments include;

- **Plans for expansion of the real ale offering as sales develop by installing a further two hand pumps, one of which is likely to feature a real cider.**
- **A new kitchen which from early April will offer home cooked dishes such as quality soups, casseroles and sandwiches served from 12 to approx 8pm**
- **Live bands playing acoustic music including a monthly folk night, and a weekly spot for bands from the Liverpool Band Society.**
- **A fully revised World Beer menu will be introduced in May.**

- **Plans to major on the more specialist, exciting and harder to obtain Belgian micro brewery beers, such as De Ranke XX bitter, Saison Dupont, St Bernardus Abt 12, Oud Beersel Gueuze, and La Chouffe.**

- **Tuesday features an increasingly popular quiz night with a prize of a £50 bar tab**

Events can be checked on the new website www.liverpoolkeller.com

The Pi Bar
Rose Lane Mossley Hill www.piroselane.co.uk



For a bar that only opened in November 2010 the Pi Bar is proving to be a real ale runaway success and a breath of fresh air for Mossley Hill. It has certainly struck a chord with the young professionals in the area, such that the 40 odd seats in the shop front bar are often at a premium in the evenings. There is a well worn trail from the entrance to Mossley Hill station the hundred yards to the door of the Pi bar.

Three real ales are on offer by hand pump, including the popular house beer **Tatton Blonde** which is a rarity for Liverpool. The other two beers are changing guests from micro breweries supplemented by a hand pumped real cider.

Manager Ben Reynolds knows his beers and how to look after them. He comes with the experience of running the sister Pi Bar in Chorlton Manchester which has

also been a great success winning the Manchester CAMRA Branch Pub of the Season

Another big attraction is the world beer range which is attractively presented in table beer menus



with well written tasting notes and "if you liked this try also..." suggestions. Pi is one of few bars in Liverpool that offers the Belgian beer La Chouffe on draught and this is proving very popular.

In these depressing economic times you are invited to "Keep Calm and Eat More Pies", the slogan of the Pieminister specialist pie company from Bristol who supply Pi (geddit?) with a changing choice of their pies.



Pi opening hours have been extended and are now 11am to late seven days a week. The question is can Pi extend the premises by 3.14159265358979323846 recurring to infinity to provide the extra seats !!

Train Lime Street Mainline City Line 10 minutes journey to Mossley Hill. Buses 80,80A,61 and 173.

Women Driving Real Ale Growth

The Cask Report 2009 reveals that women are driving the growth in real ale sales. Contrary to popular perception that real ale is not a women's drink, the facts are that;

- One in six women now drink real ale
- Women now account for one in six of all real ale drinkers
- The number of women who have tried real ale has doubled
- The number who continue to drink it has doubled
- Women are interested in range of beer styles,

different flavours, complexity and character of flavour.

The number of women who drink real ale has **DOUBLED** from; 630,000 in 2008 To 1.3 million in 2009

ASDA Ale Survey

A survey by ASDA supermarkets shows that sales of bottled ales are soaring among younger men and women, with six out of ten men aged 21-34 favouring ale over lager, while a quarter of women prefer a glass of ale over wines and spirits. Sales of premium bottled ales are up a remarkable 22% amongst shoppers in their 20s and early 30s



The Crow's Nest



63 Victoria Rd, Crosby. 0151 924 6953

Merseyrail - Blundellsands & Crosby station - 10 min walk

Four Regular Real Ales
and constantly changing Guest Ales

Beers from breweries all over the country!

The Crow's Nest is a charming grade II listed building with a cosy bar, tiny snug and comfortable lounge. You'll enjoy a warm welcome and great beer in this beautiful old pub.

**Voted Best Community Pub 2004/5
Pub of Excellence 2002/3**

Above awards from Liverpool and districts CAMRA. Recommended in the Good Beer Guide



Introducing Women to Real Ale the Liverpool Way



A full house of 30 women, many of them new to real ale, acclaimed the Liverpool and Districts CAMRA Branch "Women and Real Ale Tasting" evening with a sustained round of applause, having tasted six very different real ales and enjoyed some excellent food.

A survey of those present revealed the interesting result that most would definitely join CAMRA if similar social events attractive to women were organised by the Branch on a quarterly basis.



This was the first event in the new Liverpool CAMRA Branch programme of six events through the year entitled Bringing New People to Real Ale. Further events are planned aimed at women and also for Young People and recently joined CAMRA members with the aim of encouraging them to become active in the organisation.

One of the event organisers Liverpool CAMRA member Jean Pownceby said;

"The room was buzzing throughout with social

conversation and discussion about the merits of the different beers. Our aim was to invite women who were new to real ale or had never tried it before and we encouraged them to bring a female friend. We also wanted to give them a favourable impression that traditional pubs can be women friendly.

All present commented that the event had given them a much more favourable opinion of both real ale and of pubs. An additional spin off was comments that the event changed their view of CAMRA, now seeing it as an active and welcoming organisation with something to offer women."

One of the participants Geraldine Roberts-Stone commented;

"Everything seemed to go really well. It's certainly persuaded me to try new things in the pub next time. It was good to see everyone's opinions noted up in the book for future reference.

It was like women drinkers were really being listened to. I enjoyed learning a bit more about different beers, and to appreciate the taste and appearance outside my "comfort zone."

The event was organised in partnership with the Liverpool Pub of the Year the Dispensary whose licensee Pauline Keady Williams and husband Dave gave great support.

The pub was chosen as it is a leading example of how a traditional pub is women friendly and recognised as safe place for women to visit. The event was organised by three women

Liverpool CAMRA members, Jean Pownceby, Jan Sorsby and Helen McCall, pictured left.

The six beers tasted were Salopian Oracle, Ossett Silver King, George Wright Mark's Mild, Cains Bitter, Titanic Compass and Titanic Plum Porter.

Jean Pownceby comments;

"The clear message is that if CAMRA wants to bring new people to real ale then it needs to go to them with the opportunity to taste real ales in a relaxed friendly environment. If it wants to involve more women then it also needs to arrange social events that are attractive to women as a regular part of the Branch social programme."

A survey of those present conducted by CAMRA Member Zoe Manning* produced interesting results which have an important message for involving women in real ale

- Twenty six of the thirty women said they would join CAMRA if the Branch ran quarterly events of this type attractive to women.

- All said they had thoroughly enjoyed the evening and were pleased that CAMRA had made a real effort to listen to their opinions.

* Read Zoe's article on next page



What Women Want with Real Ale and CAMRA

A wild and windy Monday night in February saw the arrival of an unusual crowd in the CAMRA Pub of the Year, The Dispensary, Renshaw Street. Rather than the anoraks and backpacks that we'd usually see squeezing through those bright red doors - like spots caught between two thumbs - this otherwise Dickensian night was transformed by the tinkle of heeled shoes on the polished wooden floor and laughter rang out across the rainy cobbles.

Enter the Women

It was 'out with the bald and in with the blonde', as one regular was heard to mumble under his muzzy, days later. But seriously, mildly sexist jokes aside! Isn't it about time we broke down the stereotypes of real ale drinkers and focused instead on the reasons why there are fewer women involved in CAMRA than men. Needless to say that the thirty or so women who turned up for our CAMRA tasting social were not only unstoppably stylish, but clearly had great taste as well! So why is it that we see less women in real ale pubs?

Jean, Jan and Helen, the female organisers of this night of FUN, greeted each new arriver, not only with beaming smiles of anticipation, but with delicious canapés as well! After being led to their seats in the VIP 'reserved' section of the pub, the women were plied with snacks and dips from every angle; it was a feast.

Once Pauline and Bar Lord Dave, the licensees at the Dispensary, had said a few words to get the evening off to an official start- to the delight of all involved- out came the free beer!

Survey of Views – Why Don't You Drink Real Ale?

Slurping away at my own sample of *Salopian Oracle*, I set out armed with my notebook to do some acrobatics round the crowded tables and see if I could uncover the truth about women and that sweet sweet nectar we at CAMRA refer to as



'real ale' in polite conversation.

This reporter jumped straight in with the big question: "why don't you drink real ale?"

"Sometimes we do", came the response from one thirty-something, "but how are we supposed to choose one we'll like every time if we don't know what to ask for and there are no tasting notes anyway? I'm not going to hold up a bar full of people after work on a Friday night asking the bartender for a description of six different ales that won't make any sense to me anyway!"



This was a good point, although the tasting evening would allow for an increase in beer vocabulary, I struggled to think of many real ale pubs I frequent that do have tasting notes for the ales. So how's a gal t'know?

Feeling like the pieces of this puzzle where starting to come together I helped myself to a *George Wright Mark's Mild* and an *Ossett Silver King* and while Jean talked us through the tasting notes I shuffled round to some more familiar faces and asked them the same question.

"Some of my work-mates think it's frumpy", "I don't really have a group of women to drink real ale

with", "There's a stigma attached to a woman drinking a pint", came the quick retorts and I was hearing the same points again and again.

Gulping down another sample, this time of *Titanic Compass*, I raised the issue of presentation. Most of the women that evening said they would much prefer the 'package' of a branded glass and not-surprisingly mentioned that real ale isn't generally marketed for women. Turning our thoughts from dark memories of busty-blondes in rabbit ears on pump clips and names such as 'Old Slapper', we sampled my favourite beer of the evening- *Titanic Plum Porter*. Opinions were as mixed as the tastes of the beers and I was bewildered when most women came down in favour of the lighter brews, like our final taster, *Oakhams JHB*.

Women Friendly Socials are the Key for CAMRA

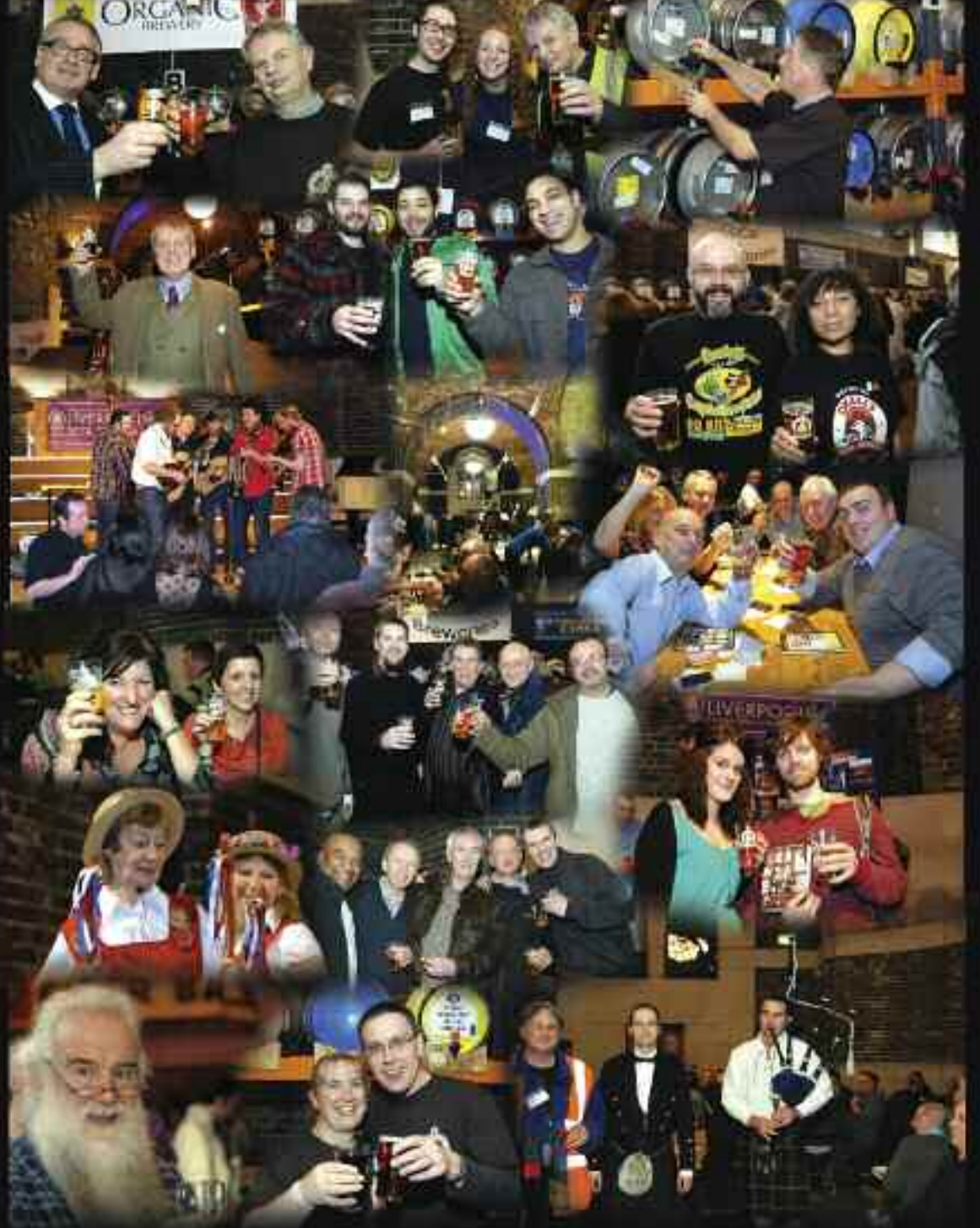
But whether we preferred the rich fruity porter or the dry hops of the pale ales, we all had one thing we agreed on: **WE WANT MORE SOCIALS!**

After all, what's the point in being in a club if you don't get the chance to meet the other members? All the women who attended our night of high spirits and getting to know each other said that they would definitely join CAMRA if it meant regular social events, such as the tasting evening. Joyce, one of only two CAMRA members to attend told us that her husband used to say, "There are only two types of beer worth drinking, one is real beer, and the other is free beer!"

Amen sister.

Zoe Manning

Liverpool Beer Festival 2011



SOUND THE PIBROCH

Another first for the Liverpool Beer Festival was the ceremonial walk through the Crypt Concert Room and the Beer Hall led by Liverpool CAMRA member Angus Morrison, from the Isle of Lewis and the Delifonseca

Stanley Street, in full Highland dress, (yes that does include a kilt), followed by Scottish piper Gordon Todd from Clackmannanshire. The acoustics of the Crypt proved that the pipes are a natural partner for the building.

RICHMOND PUB



Paddy Golden
1926 - 2004
Richmond
Regular

The Richmond is a traditional family-run pub in the heart of the city centre and has been trading as a pub for over a hundred years.

The regular real ales on offer are **Southport Golden Sands, George Wright and the Famous Draught Bass plus 3 rotating Guest Ales**



We regularly have **Champion Beer of Britain Winner-Southport Golden Sands on sale**



Southport Brewery
Golden Sands won the Best Bitter category at the Champion Beer of Britain Competition 2009

THE RICHMOND 32 WILLIAMSON STREET L1 1EB

THE LORD WARDEN

The Lord Warden is the sister pub to the famous Richmond pub and has had a complete refurbishment inside and out.



There are **3 hand pumps serving a variety of Local and Regional Ales**

We are one of the least expensive pubs in Liverpool. So come inside and enjoy a good pint in a friendly local atmosphere

The Lord Warden London Road Liverpool



Lifetime Achievement Award

Awarded to Alfie and Jackie Buxton and the White Star



Alfie and Derek Coulter
Caledonian Brewery

The CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival was the prestigious venue for the presentation a very special Lifetime Achievement Award to mark the work of one of Liverpool's leading licensees.

Alfie Buxton licensee of the White Star, Rainford Gardens in the Cavern Quarter for over twenty years, has been selected for his many contributions to promoting real ale and real pubs in Liverpool. Aply assisted by his wife Jackie Buxton they have built the White Star into a famous Liverpool institution.

The Award, including a Scottish Quaich, a ceremonial drinking cup, was presented by the Managing Director of Caledonian Brewery Stephen Crawley, himself an old boy of Birkenhead School and a great fan of Liverpool pubs as being amongst the best in Britain.

Stephen Crawley said

"Alfie has done an amazing job in constantly developing the White Star as an iconic traditional Liverpool pub which should be on every visitor's itinerary. He has a long standing commitment to real ale, dating from times when real ale was not the success story it is today. He has created a classic traditional pub in midst of the "here today gone tomorrow" youth bars in the Cavern Quarter. The interior is a treasure trove of memorabilia, photographs and original paintings of Liverpool life and history which would do credit to the new Liverpool Museum"

The list of Alfie's and Jackie's achievements is impressive.

- One of the first pubs in Liverpool to run its own real ale pubs festival presenting a wide range of beers not at that time seen in the city

- Maintained the White Star as a champion of real ales in the midst of the lager bars in the Cavern Quarter.

- Made the pub a "must visit" experience for the visitor with its vast range of Liverpool historical memorabilia plus the chance to sit in the same seats as the Fab Four used to collect their gig fees.

- Having more brass plaques outside than any other building in Liverpool, recording the remarkable number of twinning arrangements with bars and football teams across Europe !!!

- Featuring the smallest smoking garden in Liverpool which is decorated with hand painted murals depicting Liverpool scenes.

Geoff Edwards Chair of Liverpool and Districts CAMRA said;

"Alfie and the White Star stand out as a beacon of real ale in the Cavern Quarter and warrant national appreciation for how he has developed the pub into a living history of Liverpool life. A visitor could spend hours just looking at the profusion of items decorating the walls. This is a gem in the heart of Liverpool."



THE MANSION HOUSE
ST HELENS

Beer Festival

FRIDAY 6th MAY 2011
7pm to 11pm
SATURDAY 7th MAY 2011
11am to 11pm

Victoria Bistro Open
HOT POT AND SNACKS AVAILABLE

Supporting Services of
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£5.00 ENTRY (Includes Commemorative Glass, Programme and Beer Tokens)

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We are very proud of our great range of local bottled beers including: Liverpool One, Liverpool Organic, Wapping, Peerless, Frodsham, Beartown, Southport brewery, George Wright and more.

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Crack of Doom in Cornwall? For Sharp's Now Read Molson Coors !!

Not quite so alluring is it? No resonance of Cornish cliffs and coves and seaside. Rather of an American multi national brewer better known for its freezing cold rice beer rather than real ale.

Having contracted out the brewing of its once iconic Draught Bass to Marston's at Burton on Trent and declaring they were now leaving real ale brewing to those who did it best, the Molson Coors empire has decided to gobble up Sharp's Brewery in Cornwall for a cool £20 million. This follows Coors one million pound investment in their Museum Brewery at Burton on Trent which brews the famous White Shield and the new Red Shield beers.

So what is going on?

The attraction to Coors is immediate access to the British real ale guest ale market by acquiring Sharp's leading national brand Doom Bar which is the fastest growing guest ale in London and the South East. It is more debateable whether the lesser known Sharp's beers such as **Cornish Coaster, Own, Special and Chalkie's Bite** will be continued.

The attraction to Sharp's.

Well as Mrs Merton famously said to Debbie Magee *"What was it that attracted you to multi millionaire Paul Daniels?"* Twenty million pounds buys a lot of Cornish Pasties.

Sharp's owners made no secret of the fact they regarded the brewery as an investment and from day one had their eye on an exit strategy and a healthy financial gain. Their approach emphasised brand development with Doom bar the prime example.

Whist Doom Bar was a pleasant standard beer it was the other lesser known Sharp's beers that stood out as something special and it is these that may well fall by the wayside under a national tide of Molson Coor's Doom Bar.

Sharp's was founded in 1994 and last year had a turnover of £16.1m, producing 70,000 barrels of beer.

CAMRA chief executive Mike Benner said "Whilst we welcome the fact that one of the UK's biggest brewers realises that there is a future for real ale, we regret that they have decided to take this route and buy Sharp's brewery."

"What future will there be for Sharp's other beers such as Cornish Coaster and Own?" he asked.

New Real Ales and Investment at Peerless Brewery Birkenhead



Birkenhead's Peerless Brewing Company has invested in new brands and equipment and hopes to expand the company nationally.

The Peerless beer range has been strengthened with the launch of two new ales celebrating Wirral's local history.

Viking Gold (4.6%abv) is described as a new 'well balanced golden ale', highlighting the heritage of the Wirral Peninsula as the 9th century Norse capital of Britain.

Paxton's Peculiar (4.1%abv) pays tribute to acclaimed 19th century

architect Sir Joseph Paxton, who designed Birkenhead Park, the first public park in Britain, and which became the model for Central Park in New York. A copper coloured mix of dark mild and blonde beer, this is described as a 'very drinkable ale with a complex array of malt, chocolate and then citrus overtones'.

With funding support from Wirral Council and help from Barclay's Bank and the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), investment has been made in equipment, including 220 new ale casks from Hereford Casks Ltd and cask washing equipment supplied by Johnson Brewing & Engineering Ltd of Rochdale.

This will facilitate a 40% increase in production capacity to a total of 140 nines a week.

Throughout the latest expansion project, Peerless was assisted by Wirral Council's business support team, Invest Wirral, which enabled not only funding support but also worked closely with the company in helping to develop a business plan and strategy for growth.

A trainee brewer Mark Powell has been taken on supported through the Wirral Council Apprenticeship Scheme and a Sales Manager is to be appointed.

The current core real ale portfolio is **Red Rocks** (5%abv), **Triple Blond** (4.1%abv) and strong ruby ale **Full Whack** (6%abv). For the summer **Storr** lager will be brewed as a seasonal ale, while further new brews are also planned.

Chester Ales – A New Brewery

Plans are afoot for a new real ale brewery in Chester provisionally named Chester Ales.

ROSCOE HEAD

24 Roscoe Street L1 2SX
Tel: 0151 709 4365

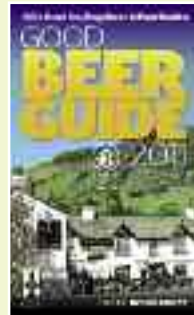


www.roscoehead.co.uk

The Roscoe Head is a true English public house with lots of character. One of the few pubs in Liverpool and indeed Great Britain to have survived the onslaught of the super pub chains and remains unspoilt. With a recent sympathetic refurbishment, which has still managed to retain its original character, The Roscoe Head is a very special watering hostelry.

Consisting of two small rooms, a main bar and a tiny snug, conversation definitely rules at this establishment, not here will be found a jukebox or fruit machines, just good beer, traditional food and a warm welcome, all delivered by our friendly and well-trained staff.

The Roscoe Head is a town local with customers from all walks of life, the backroom debates are always entertaining whether it be politics or football on the agenda the banter is always good.



Tetley's Bitter and Jennings Bitter

**PLUS 4
Constantly Changing
GUEST BEERS!**

Try our delicious home-cooked food

served Mon- to Fri 11.30am - 2.30 pm

**Popular Quiz Night
on Tuesday, always fun!**

**We also have a cribbage night on
Wednesdays**



Winner of many awards and the only North West pub to feature in every edition of the Good Beer Guide. That's 37 years of Good Beer Guide entries!

CAMRA 40 Up A Double Celebration in Liverpool



Carol second left, Margaret centre with Geoff Edwards and the Roscoe Staff

Where better to celebrate CAMRA's 40th Anniversary other than in one of Britain's Magnificent Seven Pubs.

The Roscoe Head, Roscoe Street, is one of only SEVEN pubs in the whole of Britain that that have been in EVERY edition of the CAMRA Good Beer



Guide since it was first published in 1974.

There was another double when licensee Carol Ross was joined by her mother Margaret who was the

licensee before Carol. The Roscoe Head has the distinction of having been run by members of the same family for over 30 years, which without doubt



is a factor in the high standards set at the pub.

The 40th event attracted much media attention, with full page articles in both the Liverpool Echo and the Daily Post. Radio Merseyside evening news

programme broadcast a live interview from the pub, during which the Roscoe Head was described as "a national treasure". Passers by will be in doubt about the Roscoe Head's claim to fame as



Liverpool CAMRA have provided Carol with an eight foot banner which is now proudly displayed on the front of the building.

For the event the pub was decked out inside with a festive display of balloons provided by the Liverpool Branch, including large gold stars displaying both the CAMRA 40th Anniversary

logo and the Branch Liver bird. The balloons appeared in the press photos.

The festivities continued with an evening event for



CAMRA members and Roscoe Head regulars, at which both Carol and Geoff Edwards Chair of the Branch welcomed everyone and toasted both

CAMRA's achievements and the proud record of the Roscoe Head. There was also a rallying cry that the new battleground is the survival of the British pub in the face of the many challenges to its economic future.

THE GRAPES

60 ROSCOE ST (CORNER OF KNIGHT ST) L1 9DW 0151 708 6870



6 Handpumps

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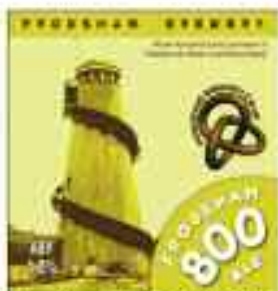
At Wirral Farmers Market every 2nd Saturday of the month



SIBA North Gold Medal 2010



Latest addition new beer SIBA North Gold Medal 2009



Frodsham Brewery, Lady Heyes Craft Centre, Kingsley Road, FRODSHAM, WA6 6SU
Tel: 01928 787917 Shop is open everyday 12noon-4pm

MerseyAlenews



Tunnale at Bears Paw

The Bears Paw on Irvine Street Edge Hill now stocks the Liverpool Organic Brewery bottled beer Tunnale, the latest in the LOB series of Liverpool Heroes

beers. The beer commemorates Joseph Williamson, known as the Mole of Edge Hill for the network of tunnels he had dug under the area by men returning from the Napoleonic Wars. The tunnels are still to be fully excavated and are so extensive that



their full network has yet to be discovered.

Members of the Friends of Williamson's Tunnels www.williamsonstunnels.com are photographed enjoying a drink of Tunnale at the Bears Paw after a digging session at their tunnel site on Paddington just behind the pub. Photo copyright of Chris Isles.

Readers may be interested to know that the name Tunnale was a suggestion of the MerseyAle designer Dennis Jones who also designed the bottle labels.

Real Rock Real Ale

Specialist concert promoters UltimateSetlistLive are bringing

two progressive rock themed concerts to the Merseyside region in June this year, along with their 'real ale & real music' tagline (see the advert in this issue). According to promoter Neil Haigh there is a very good link between the two; "We put together a Genesis tribute concert at Pacific Road Arts Centre

around 18 months ago, and we centred it around two classic Genesis albums, along with our very own Genesis branded real ale 'Squonk' (which was supplied by Betwixt Brewery of Birkenhead): this sold out almost immediately, followed not long after by the Timothy Taylors Landlord! We think there is nothing better than an evening of great rock music in a fine concert venue along with a decent real ale on tap that you can get from a bar set directly opposite the stage!" So if you like progressive rock and real ale then it sounds like Pacific Road is the place to be this June!

Pub News

The Derby Arms in Woolton Village

Has been taken over by Eunice Thompson and daughter Kelly formerly at the Carnafon Castle which is still been run by Robbie Carney. They are planning to promote the real ales and hope to expand the selection to four. At present they are selling Cains and Bombardier and are planning to regularly change the guest beers. They are also looking to redecorate the pub in the near future and look forward to establishing it as a popular village local.

Closed Pubs

Gardeners Arms Broadgreen and the Knotty Ash are closed and boarded up. Cabbage Hall

Anfield is being converted into flats.

Liverpool Cheese Company in Woolton Village

Are currently selling a selection of local brewery bottled beers, including Liverpool Organic Brewery, George Wright, Peerless, and Liverpool One Brewery beers. The beers are selling from £3.15 per bottle.



LocAle Latest

CAMRA's LocAle scheme promotes real ales brewed within a 30 mile radius of the pub, thereby supporting local brewers and reducing environmentally damaging "beer miles".

Look for the LocAle sticker and pump clips in the pub.

Pubs interested in joining the LocAle scheme should contact campaigns@merseycamra.org.uk

Liverpool pubs that have joined the LocAle scheme are;

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Augustus John | Roscoe Head |
| Baltic | Vernon Arms |
| Belvedere | Ye Cracke |
| Blackburn Arms | The Picturedrome |
| Brewery Tap | Edinburgh |
| Caledonia | Kelly's |
| Dispensary | Dispensary |
| Dr Duncans | Cat and Fiddle |
| Everyman | Stamps |
| Grapes (Knight St) | Stamps Too |
| Lord Warden | The Old Bank |
| The Lion | Philharmonic Hall |
| Richmond | Halton Castle |

Britain's Top 4 Pubs

CAMRA has announced the winner of the National Pub of the Year Award along with the other three finalists and the full list of Britain's Top 16 pubs, the winners of the sixteen Regional Pub of the Year Awards.

London Pub crowned 'Best in Britain' by CAMRA

First ever London pub to win CAMRA's National Pub of the Year competition.

The WINNER:

The Harp, 47 Chandos Place, Covent Garden, London, WC2N 4HS

CAMRA has announced that in the year of the organisation's 40th anniversary, The Harp, Covent Garden, is the first London pub to win its National Pub of the Year competition.

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year accolade recognises all the criteria that make a great pub, including atmosphere, decor, customer service, value for money, clientele mix, and most importantly, the quality of the beer.

The Harp is described in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2011 as 'a small, friendly, independent free house which has become a haven for beer choice, generally including a mild or porter, Dark Star and London Micro-brewery seasonal. The narrow bar is adorned with mirrors, theatrical memorabilia and portraits. There is no intrusive music or TV and a cosy upstairs room provides refuge from the busy throng.'

Owned by celebrated real ale pioneer Bridget Walsh, the pub is a

true gem situated only a few yards from Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery, serving 8 real ales and a wide selection of real ciders and perries at any one time. The Harp is revered for its high standards, with judges most impressed by the pub's outstanding commitment and energy towards promoting Britain's national drink.

Kimberly Martin, CAMRA's London Regional Director, said:

'I never ceased to be impressed or surprised by the continuing success of a pub staffed by individuals so



© CAMRA

passionate about the real ale industry. The Harp is a perfect example of how the London cask beer scene is reaching out to new drinkers.'

Bridget Walsh first took on The Harp as a tenanted pub in 1995 (buying the pub outright in 2009) and went about transforming it into a pub dedicated to real ale, real cider and real sausages. With more than 40 years experience in the beer and pub industry, Bridget has been winning CAMRA awards



© CAMRA

for her cellarman skills since the 1970's, but recent successes in CAMRA's West London Pub of the Year (2006, 2008, 2010) and London Regional Pub of the Year (2010) have heralded national acclaim.

On hearing news of her success, Bridget Walsh said:

'This news came as a complete shock but of course we are delighted to be named CAMRA's National Pub of the Year. We pride ourselves on the range and quality of our real ale and to be London's first ever National Pub of the Year is a real honour. I would like to thank my locals, CAMRA members and particularly my brilliant staff, who made this a real team effort.'

Julian Hough, CAMRA Pubs Director, concluded:

'The most impressive aspect of The Harp is that it retains its appeal as a true local, even though situated in the tourist heart of the capital. What makes a great pub is the ability for it to welcome both regulars and first time customers alike and this is something it does to perfection.'

Each CAMRA branch votes for their top branch pub. The branch winners are entered into 16 regional competitions, with the 16

winners then battling it out to reach the final stages of the National competition.

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year competition is now in its 23rd year. To view a list of previous winners, please visit the CAMRA website at www.camra.org.uk/potywinners

National Pub of the Year runners-up: South West

**Salutation, Ham Green, Berkeley, Ham, Gloucestershire, GL13 9QH
Tel. 01453 810284**

'Rural free house situated in the Severn Valley within walking distance of the Jenner Museum, Berkeley Castle and Deer Park. This friendly local sources its beers from nearby breweries and is popular with walkers and cyclists. The pub has two cosy bars, with a log fire and a skittle alley/ function room. Food is served lunchtimes and early evening. There is a child-friendly garden at the front of the pub. CAMRA Gloucestershire Pub of the Year 2010.'

West Midlands

**Beacon Hotel, 129 Bilton Street, Sedgley, DY3 1JE
Tel. 01902 883380**

'This beautifully-restored Victorian tap house and tower brewery is the

home of Sarah Hughes ales. The heart of this popular pub is the small island servery with hatches serving the central corridor, a small, cosy snug, and the large main room. It also has a benched tap room and a family room leading to a garden. Cobs are available. Local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2008, 2009 and 2010. The strong barley wine Snowflake is on sale during the Christmas period.'

West Pennines

**The Taps, Henry Street, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, FY8 5LE
Tel. 01253 736226,
www.thetaps.net**

'This multi award-winning one-roomed pub was CAMRA Branch Pub of The Year 2010, with six varying guest beers including a cask mild. The pub supports the local lifeboat and rugby team, and much memorabilia is displayed. The landlord is the only person to win Branch Pub of the Year in two different pubs. The venue stocks a regularly changing real cider.'



In next edition we will feature the other 12 regional winners.



© CAMRA



© CAMRA



© CAMRA

Government Give Green Light for Supermarkets to carry on selling cheap booze

The Government's announcement that they will ban below cost selling of alcohol is not quite what it seems, for their definition of "below cost" selling is merely the cost of excise duty plus VAT. No account is taken of the costs of production and distribution.

Duty and VAT equate to 21p a unit or 47p a pint of 4% beer. However if the cost of production is factored in the floor price should be about 90p a pint.

The move will do nothing to relieve the pressure on pubs where the price of a pint of beer is approaching £3.00. So supermarkets can carry on selling beer below the cost of bottled water.

Iain Loe



Bier Keller

2 Ever-changing Handpumps

CAMRA Members discount on Real Ales - Food Served Daily until 8pm



30+
Beers from
around the
world
Quiz Night
every Tues
(£50 Bar tab
Prize)

Dave and Carolyn would like to extend a warm welcome to all Merseyale readers to their recently opened pub

Regular Live Music Nights - See website for details

Opening Hours: Mon - Thurs 12pm - 11:00pm; Fri & Sat 12pm - 12am
www.liverpoolkeller.com Find us on Facebook & Twitter

40-46 Dale Street (entrance on Stanley Street), L2 6BF Tel: 0151 255 0056 Email: bierkeller@btconnect.com



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Great beers....in the 'burbs!

4 Handpumps : 3 Real Ale from Northwest micro breweries, guest real cider

With an emphasis on Quality AND Quantity we have a huge and eclectically obscure range of 8 draught and 60+ bottled beers from all over the world.

Stonkingly good Pie Minister Pies served right through till 11pm every night.

Freshly ground coffee and home-made cakes

Newly opened on Rose Lane, 200 yards up the hill from Mossley Hill station.

Sister bar of the award winning Pi (Chorlton)

Open 11am-Late - 7 days

Pi (Rose Lane)
106 Rose Lane
0151 222 0443

WWW.PI-ROSELANE.CO.UK



Real Music Real Ale Real Pubs

Dear MerseyAle,

For better or for worse, the first time I was paid to play a music engagement or gig, it was in the upstairs room of licensed premises. That those premises are now known as the "Ship & Mitre" in Dale Street is hugely significant.

The "Mitre", as it was then known, was an idiosyncratic environment whose downstairs was full of eccentric looking patrons were wont to stand up and dance to the Perry Como-playing juke-box at the proverbial "drop of a hat", about as far removed from "Rock & Roll" as could be. It was, however a breeding ground for the kind of songwriting folk, acoustic and blues players whose sons and daughters now grace the very same venue under the guise of "Nu-Folk".

With these facts in mind I believe it is easy to understand my horror at the reaction I witnessed from a licensee in February this year when I asked whether there were gigs featuring live music in the venue. This elicited a complete dismissal of the idea including the immortal words, minus the expletives, "I'd sooner have musicians in here giving me money than taking it off me... See any musicians in here? That's the way I like it!" before inviting me to leave which I was most pleased to do, never having returned since.

I felt I was witnessing the demise of the special relationship between music and pub culture which had served each other well and created such an important cultural symbiosis since Big Bill Broonzy played the Temple and the Merseysippi Jazz Band and Jacqui and Bridie were resident in Wavertree's Coffee House.

The degree of philistinism in evidence during our exchange astonished me. To a well-established songwriter and performer in the city of Liverpool as well as a CAMRA supporter, music teacher and Musicians' Union learning advisor who enjoyed contributing to the Cajun music sessions at the self-same venue under the previous management, the irony was unavoidably depressing.

What is crucial to remember is that, without the upstairs rooms of pubs in the city, the city centre would have died musically for a generation barely five years after its finest hours. The early 1970s

saw the first waves of mass unemployment, of Public Spending and power cuts, while the Merseybeat wave had all but ebbed away, the Cavern was about to shut and the Iron Door had slammed for the last time.

All over Britain it was the pub venues that saved us and in turn the musicians, poets and performers who saved them as club-land closed.

From the Spinners' Clubs at Gregson's Well in Islington and the Triton in Paradise Street, O'Connor's Tavern and Ye Cracke, Streets, the White House, the Masonic and Peter Kavanagh's there has been a long and illustrious tradition of unity between pub venues their patrons and musicians which has produced such luminaries as Elvis Costello, Connie Lush, The Icicle Works, John O'Connell and Charlie Landsborough.

We take this tradition for granted at our peril.

I would like to appeal to all involved in the maintenance of real public houses to remember the contribution of music to the adding of product value which at its best transforms the consumption of well-kept real ales into an authentic and deep social, educational and cultural experience as much part of our cultural heritage as Shakespeare, maypoles, Morris dancers and Merseybeat.

Let it be our resolution- to give real & live music and musicians a chance in 2011 and let's see a re-birth of an attitude and culture which appreciates the value, not the price of the musical symbiosis which has made Liverpool justly famous throughout the world especially as the city council redoubles its efforts to have our city designated a "World Music City".

Let's be honest, in the austere times ahead, we are going to need each other once again.

name & address supplied

Editor's note

The letter does not mention another factor which has had a great impact on music in pubs - Government changes to the music licensing laws which have greatly increased the cost of having more than one performer. The one performer rule has also been a factor in the growth of karaoke in pubs as this has only one "performer" if that is too strong a word for the limited talent often on show.

The Turks Head

St Helens CAMRA
PUB OF THE YEAR
2009



Adelle, Amanda & Daryl

**A Traditional
Friendly Pub with
a Great
Atmosphere,
Real Fire
and an Ever
Changing range of
Real Ale**

**Beer Festivals
throughout
the year
phone for details**



**A CAMRA REGIONAL
PUB OF THE
YEAR**

A Runner-up for the
CAMRA
NATIONAL PUB OF THE
YEAR

**12 handpumps
Serving Traditional Ales
Ciders and Perry**

- 5 draught continental beers ■ Wide selection of bottled continental beers
 - Tuesday - Quiz night 9-30 pm
 - Thursday - Curry and Jazz Night
 - Cask Marque ■ Good Beer Guide 2011
- Open Mon - Fri 2-11 Sat, Sun 12-11



Cooper St. St Helens Tel 01744 751289

CAMRA Discount Scheme, Support for Community Pubs



CAMRA has launched a new initiative to help drive trade to community pubs by introducing a national, unified real ale discount scheme for CAMRA members.

Plenty of kind pubs across Britain already offer CAMRA card-carrying members discounts on the real ales they sell. This new scheme will help these pubs, and hopefully some new pubs, to clearly promote



these offers to CAMRA members resulting in hopefully more trade.

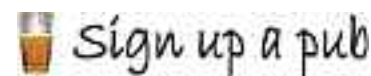
How does the CAMRA Discount Scheme work?

CAMRA has produced empty-belly posters for pubs to display behind the bar. This will help CAMRA members identify that the pub is participating in the scheme.

These posters have space for the pub to write in the discount they are offering to CAMRA members on pints and half pints.

The discount is at the discretion of the pub and can be as little or as large as the pub feels suits their business.

The poster also offers space for the pub to add any Terms and Conditions of the offer or additional discounts on items such as accommodation or food.



Which pubs can participate in the scheme?

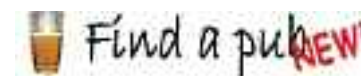
All real ale pubs can participate in this scheme. If a pub is not a freehouse, but would like to participate, then it is up to the licensee / manager to

discuss the logistics and participation with the pub owning company.

How do pubs sign up to the scheme?

Real ale pubs can sign up to the scheme by clicking here or at the bottom of this page. The pub will then be sent a FREE promotional pack in the post.

Pub licensee / managers and CAMRA branch officials can also order promotional packs by calling CAMRA Head Office on 01727 867201.



Pub Discount Scheme Online Database

Find a discount scheme pub near you today.

You can search for CAMRA Discount Scheme Pubs on www.camra.org.uk Please check with the pubs that the discount listed on this spreadsheet are still current. Pubs are within their rights to change promotions to suit their business and may not have got round to informing CAMRA of these changes.

CAMRA Discounts in Liverpool Pubs

BierKeller Stanley Street Dale Street corner

20 pence discount on pint and 10p on a half of real ale on production of CAMRA membership card

Wetherspoons Liverpool pubs EXCEPT the Lime Kiln Concert Square

20 pence discount on a pint of real ale – not available in addition to the 50p CAMRA national voucher offer.

MerseyRAle MainLine – Your Next Station Stop

Both begin with S. Both are in Yorkshire. Both are in Railway Stations. Both are brilliant conversions of railway properties to top notch real ale pubs. Both are on scenic rail routes, the Calder Valley line and the Hope Valley line. Both are well worth catching the train to experience!

They are Sowerby Bridge Jubilee Refreshment Rooms and Sheffield Tap World Beer Bar.

MerseyRAle - Your Next Station Stop - Sowerby Bridge Jubilee Refreshment Rooms

Many people are now familiar with the Trans Pennine Stalybridge to Dewsbury Rail Ale Trail especially since its appearance on the Oz Clarke and James May television



series. Fewer will be familiar with the “other” parallel Trans Pennine rail route the Calder Valley line from Manchester Victoria to Bradford and the many interesting pubs in the towns en route, including Hebden Bridge, Halifax and Sowerby Bridge. Regrettably the connecting service from Liverpool Lime Street (usually 00.46 arriving Victoria at 01.49 for onward connection at 02.00) is only a once an hour all stations stopping train.

The Calder Valley pubs trail differs from the Trans Pennine version in that there is only one station where you walk off the train straight into a pub and that is the **Jubilee Refreshment Rooms (JRR) at Sowerby Bridge**, a town which offers no fewer than twelve real ale pubs.

Sowerby Bridge is in a deep river valley with an important canal junction overlooked by the hills and the impressive **Wainhouse Tower**.

The Jubilee Refreshment Rooms (JRR) is located in the remaining wing of the former grand station building. This was demolished some years ago following a fire. Photographs of the original station on the walls of the JRR are a reminder of what we have lost. The remaining wing has been sensitively restored in classic waiting room style by enthusiastic licensees Andrew and Chris Wright. Exterior signing is in the distinctive BR North Eastern Region tangerine. For those of a literary leaning Branwell Bronte worked at the station as assistant clerk.

A novel feature of the JRR is the early morning service of hot drinks and breakfasts from the Whistlestop Window and also from a platform trolley providing a service much appreciated by morning commuters. Breakfasts



are available inside the JRR from 9.30 (9am on Saturdays) to noon with light meals such as pies available 5 to 7pm with the bar



open 12 to 10pm. Sunday opening is noon to 10pm.

The main event is to be found on the long wooden bar at the far end of the room.

There is an impressive array of six hand pumps serving a changing range of mainly LocAle beers mostly from micros. Andrew and Chris are true beer enthusiasts keen to showcase quality real ales from the surrounding area.



At the back of the bar is an Olive Restaurant Award 2010 for the Best Reason to Travel by Train. No argument with that !!

The JRR has been entered for a number of heritage and railway renovation awards.

Given the twelve real ale pubs in Sowerby the JRR helpfully offer an excellent free pub locator map to guide you around the town.

A future edition of Mersey Ale will feature the full Sowerby Bridge Rail Ale Guide.

Photographs © John Myddelton

Your Next Station Stop – Sheffield Tap World Beer Bar



© Duncan Harris

Sheffield is the venue of the 2011 C A M R A National Members Weekend and AGM Friday 15th to Sunday 17th April – see www.camra.org.uk. Sheffield is also the location of the Sheffield Tap, a pub located on Platform One of the railway station.

Anyone who remembers the Sheffield Midland station of ten years ago will be amazed at the transformation that has been wrought through the extension of the concourse into what was the taxi rank, thereby creating a bright



© Sparklepete

stylish circulation area. The frontage has been further enhanced with a major water feature with fountains and a 200 yard long Wall of Water which shimmers in the sun.

The icing on the cake is the renovation of the disused refreshment room to create the **Sheffield Tap World Beer Bar**. The original 1904 features have been retained especially the fine wall tiling, with a fine Edwardian mahogany bar back and marble floor setting off the high vaulted room. There are three side rooms one of which proudly displays the original nameplate from Great Western Railway Hall class steam locomotive Thornbridge Hall.

Which is the clue to the business links behind the scheme. Thornbridge Hall was the original location of the acclaimed award

winning Thornbridge Brewery brewers of Jaipur IPA. On the bar you will find 10 hand pumps, six of which serve Thornbridge beers with the other four offering changing guest beers. You will see the full range of Thornbridge beer clips along the back wall – an impressive sight.

The business link up is between Thornbridge and Bernard Pivo the Czech brewery which has four of its Pilsners on draught, including a special seasonal unfiltered example Nefiltravo Pivo, the only location in the UK where it is available.

The Tap describes itself as a World Beer Bar and that is borne out by the offering of over 130 Belgian bottled beers including Boon Marriage Parfait and Cantillon Gueuze and the full range of Trappiste beers. There is also a good range of craft beers from the USA including **Dog Fish, Goose Island, Brooklyn, Odell and Stone**. In American craft brewing style these carry quirky names such **Arrogant Bastard** and **Raging Bitch**. Ask for the printed bottle beer list and prepare to be impressed.

The high quality of the work has been marked by the Sheffield Tap being the winner of the 2010 National Rail Heritage Renovation Award sponsored by Modern Railways and presented by Pete Waterman. The blue award plaque can be seen on the Tap frontage on Platform One

Despite having a door directly onto Platform One this kind of real ale and world beer line up could seriously jeopardise your chances of making your connection! And beware. The bar does not have a train departure screen!

The partners who developed the Sheffield Tap have two other bars offering the same mix of Real Ales and World Beers;

The Euston Tap Craft Beer House on the right hand side of the frontage of Euston Station was

opened in November 2010. Located in the listed West Lodge of the Station (note the carved destination names), it is a stone temple like building offering eight real ales and 150 bottled beers, making it another useful Next Station Stop when arriving or departing Euston.



At the centre of the small floor space is a centrally located square green tiled bar with the beer dispense located behind a copper clad wall at the rear. Around the walls is a shelf for glasses and about six stools. The emphasis here is on shoulder to shoulder standing crush loading drinking to get you in the groove for the train home! The intrepid can climb the unfeasibly steep metal spiral



© Bernt Rostad

staircase to the upper room which has seats for about 40 and also the one and only toilet – if you need to go then you have been warned!

The Pivni Bar in the centre of York at 6 Patrick Pool YO1 8BB has a similar winning formula of real ales and world bottled beers.

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Source Deli (Ormskirk), **Mello Mello** (Slater St) and **Little Pizza Kitchen** (Waterloo).

email: info@liverpoolorganicbrewery.com www.liverpoolorganicbrewery.com



World's 10 Strongest Beers – Chasing Silly Numbers?

At least it is the Top 10 at time of printing! This is rather like the Cold War Arms Race with brewers vying to outdo each other to be top of the silly strength league



Brew Dog set out to Sink the Bismarck with 41% only to find the ante was upped again by Schorschbrau to 43% with their Schorschbock. Brew Dog then planned the End of History (if not also your sense and sensibility) with a massive 55% only to find 't Koelschip had decided to Start the Future with a stonking 60%.

So What is the Future? Do we really want a 60% beer at £100 a small bottle which is nearly as strong as whisky and can only be sipped in small quantities? Surely beer is for drinking not sipping.



Does this Beer Race make any more sense the Arms Race? The Cold War had a word for it – MAD – Mutually Assured Destruction.

The Top 10 World Strongest Beers

1. 't Koelschip Start the Future	60%
2. Brew Dog The End of History	55%
3. Schorschbrau Schorschbock	43%
4. Brew Dog Sink the Bismarck	41%
5. Schorschbrau Schorschbock	40%
6. Struise Black Damnation VI	39%
7. Brew Dog Tactical Nuclear Penguin	32%
8. Mikkeller Henry Black	31.1%
9. Schorschbrau Schorschbock	31%
10. Sudstern XXL	27.6%

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The Final Countdown?

Will the Government Act on the PubCos?



Last year the Government warned the PubCos that they were on probation and that if they have not acted to reform their policies by June 2011 then the Government will consider legislation.

Amazingly the Brulines equipment falls outside the Weights and Measures legislation so legal action cannot be taken to challenge readings, although a Parliamentary Select Committee is reviewing this issue.

So will the Government act and live up to its claim that it is pub friendly government?

The Brulines issue is another factor in the case for the Government challenging the power that the PubCos have over licensees.

Government and MPs after formerly stopping its action against the OFT.

Power of the PubCos

- PubCos own over 23,000 of the nation's 54,818 pubs
- Punch and Enterprise Inns own 15,000 pubs – a quarter of Britain's pubs
- The PubCo beer tie means that their licensees typically pay an additional £20,000 per year for their beer

CAMRA withdraws super-complaint

CAMRA has withdrawn its appeal against the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT) decision not to refer the tie to the Competition Commission. CAMRA says its lobbying for beer tie reform will focus on the

CAMRA's head of policy and public affairs Jonathan Mail said it was a "legal formality" because the time to lodge a further appeal had passed.

He said CAMRA was now "absolutely focused" on the June deadline set by the Government for reform of the beer tie to take place.

Brulines or Wronglines?


The Brulines dispense monitoring system (known by licensees as the spy in the cellar) is used by PubCos to monitor the sales of draught beers in each pub to ensure only the approved PubCo supplied beers are being sold and to measure volumes.

Tests by the National Measurement Office (NMO) have shown that Brulines has an "accuracy variance" of between minus 5.23% and plus 3.66 for real ales. There is also a variance for keg beers, albeit smaller. These variances impact on the licensee and their financial lease agreement with the PubCo.



He added: "We are expecting the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee to announce their follow up enquiry quite soon. We will do a lot of work in putting evidence to them.

"The reality is the Pubcos have not met the criteria set down by the Select Committee at the start of last year." CAMRA claimed that rents and beer prices charged by Pubcos were putting tenants out of business and damaging choice for customers when it launched its "super complaint"



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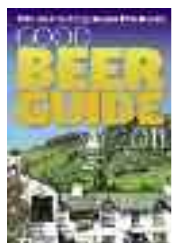
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Death of a Liverpool Legend

Murder on Hope Street

An Everyman Theatre Production

We are about to lose an institution that is a Liverpool Legend in its own Lunchtime. The Everyman Bistro (EyB) which last year celebrated its 40th Anniversary is set to close its doors for the last time at the beginning of July 2011. Within weeks the EyB will be a pile of rubble and memories as work starts on demolition of the Everyman Theatre building which houses the EyB. A new theatre building is planned to be completed by 2013.

But I hear you say were we not told in the press that the new theatre building would include "the iconic Everyman Bistro"?



Well the reality is that the design of the new building only provides one third of the space used by the current Bistro with insufficient space for a kitchen of similar size and capability. This means that there

may be a room in the new building called the Everyman Bistro but it will in no way be the same iconic operation we know and love today. The two thirds reduction in space and lack of an equivalent kitchen makes the current level of operation uneconomic and impossible to offer a similar range of food.

How would the Theatre feel if their brand new building could accommodate only one third of the

audience with no provision for actors' changing rooms?

When times were hard for the arts on Merseyside in the 1980s it was the Everyman Bistro that became the economic lifeboat for the Theatre. The partners in the Bistro, Paddy Byrne, Dave Scott and Tim Byrne, bought the building thereby keeping the Theatre from going dark and possibly closing for ever. The partners sold the building back to the Everyman Theatre Trust three years ago when the plans for a new building were confirmed.

Such is the national fame of the Everyman Bistro that it would be fair to paraphrase the advert used for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, "A great Caff with a not bad Theatre attached". For many people the Bistro is more renowned than the Theatre and captures the artistic bohemian spirit of Liverpool.

The loss of a legend has human consequences. The EyB has remarkably able and loyal staff, who have built the great reputation that the establishment enjoys nationwide, and evidenced by the string of national food wards it has won. Several of the staff has over 20 years service. It is the great team effort that underpins the EyB success and this was acknowledged by the CAMRA Special Team Achievement Award presented to the Bistro Staff Team on the occasion of the EYB 40th Anniversary in September 2010. The Award is proudly displayed behind the food service counter.

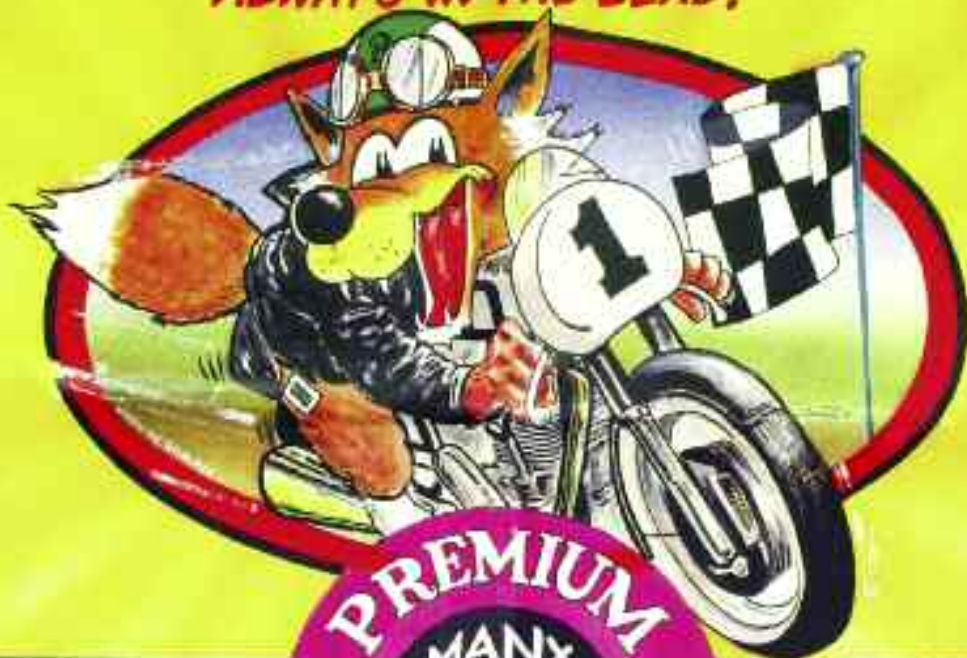
So take your seats ladies and gentlemen for tonight's performance "Who killed the EyB and why?"



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PREMIUM MANX ALES

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"ASK FOR THEM BY NAME"

Isle of Man news

Island Real Ale Survey Okells Bitter Retains Dominance of Isle of Man market.

A comprehensive all Island cask ale survey by the IOM CAMRA Branch has revealed that despite an explosion of guest ales over the past decade across Island, Okells bitter remains the market leader by a huge margin.



Very much a session brew, Okells bitter is a golden coloured beer coming in with an ABV of 3.7%, with a dry hoppy finish.

Head brewer Dr Mike Cowbourn reports that the bitter has remained almost unchanged since early reference to it in the brewery records in the 1920s. Only two small changes have occurred in recent years. When the brewery moved to its new Kewaique site back in 1994, pelletized hops were introduced, as opposed to whole hops. Secondly, these days in addition to English hops, cascade aroma hops are also used, to suit the modern palate.

Real Ale Island Survey Results

Whilst some may argue that the bitter was bound to be dominant when the parent company Heron and Brearley owned such a large proportion of the Islands outlets, the survey does however reveal that of the 72 or so cask ale outlets;

- 27 pubs stock a single real ale
- 18 outlets stock three or more real ales
- 26 carry two real ales

Thus Okells bitter, which is also available in a large number of free houses outside H&B control, is readily standing up to the competition, and continues to stand the test of time, with 52 outlets stocking the cask Okells bitter.

The survey monitored available ales in all free at point of entry outlets, from 2nd to 10th Feb.2011, a quiet time of year away from special events which distort the true ale availability. Fifty four distinct ales were available across Island, with fourteen local ales available from the three on Island breweries, as well as forty different guest beers from the UK. The purpose of the survey was to collate data as a reference source to gauge the state of the market in order that it can be accurately compared to future times.

IOM – the Off Island Capital of Real Ale?

Similar to the rivalry that exists between the great City of Liverpool and a certain northern town at the end of the ship canal, the off islands also often have a friendly banter with each other. Whilst our colleagues down on the Scilly group have a superb cask ale offering for the population size (hello Turks Head at the bottom!), and over on Lindisfarne they have about one hand pump for every ten residents, the Isle of Man must surely have a great claim to the title, in terms of offering, coverage,

and percentage of pubs with cask. Any comment Jersey/Guernsey?!!

Okells Mild to Continue plus a New Seasonal Porter

The much researched experiments and investigations into the fate of Okells Mild are complete. It has been decided to continue with the current mild after a recent upsurge in sales.



However as a result of the experimental brews and tastings, a new seasonal/special will also be produced in the near future. The brew will be of a 4% ABV and will be more of a porter in style. The UK market place remains a vital source of revenue to the brewery, and it is felt that the brewery can compete more readily in the UK with the higher strength beers, so this may have had an influence on the decision. The traditional mild (ABV 3.4%) is not exported to U.K.

Upcoming Okells seasonals include **Spring Ram** and **Old Skipper** due to appear in April and May.

Dalby Spook Sighted!

Over at Bushys brewery a series of seasonal ales form the Manx Collection and have themed names relating to various Manx events, people and folklore.

One such is Dalby Spook ale, a golden ale at 4% abv with a citrusy dry finish. The beer is named after an elusive creature of legend



reputedly seen in the Dalby area on the west of the Island around the 1930s, possibly a mongoose or a racoon that could talk! The ale lives



up to its elusive namesake, and is best described by the new category of an occasional random rather than seasonal.

Last appearing some four years ago, the first sighting this time round was at **The Marine Hotel, Peel** on Feb.5th, but it was spotted quite widely soon afterwards! Spare a thought for the army of travelling beer tickers, looking to sample as many ales as they can find. This moreish ale must represent one of their greatest challenges, (being several hundred times rarer than Bosuns Bitter from Old Laxey), and had long since vanished by mid March.

Pub News

Post and a Pint in Crosby

In a first for the Isle of Man, following the closure of the village post office in Crosby, Heron and Brearley has teamed up with Isle of



Man Post to provide postal services at The Crosby pub. Postal facilities have been placed in the entrance area to the pub, opposite to the famous motorbike featured in a glass case at the pub entrance.

The Crosby was once itself subject to closure speculation some years ago, and was in need of refurbishment. With a large car park area suitable for housing development it was feared the pub would be lost, but a massive investment was made by H&B at the time, and the pub has thrived in recent years.

Okells bitter is always available, usually along with a guest, with often further beers in the busier months. Food is served daily, with



the exception of Monday, and there are separate bars and other areas for drinkers.

Real Ale Gains

Several outlets have once again increased their cask ale offering.

Ramsey



The Royal George in Ramsey now features at least one guest ale

The Plough now has a permanent guest in addition to Okells bitter. This bustling two roomed local is now the only remaining free house of its style to remain on the high street in the Isle of Man.

Douglas

Jaks bar, a large outlet on Douglas promenade, particularly popular with sports fans watching the large TV screens, has offered real ale for



a couple of months, although the hand pump is not in a prominent position.

The Market Inn A great welcome back to the fold for the Market Inn near Douglas quay and bus station. The pub stopped stocking cask some five years ago, but now has returned with two well kept ales (using vertical stillage), a Bushys seasonal, and another guest. Already over forty guests have been stocked, in this most traditional and friendly of pubs.



Unchanged for many years and with a huge painting of a traditional market scene above the tiny bar area, The Market is a must for those preferring the older style



traditional pubs. The pub keeps long hours, and opens at 9am Tuesday to Saturday, with a 10am start on Sunday and Monday. Jayne Devereau (licensee), Dave

Ratcliffe ,and Alison Daniels are the only staff running the outlet, where everyone is on first name terms.

Peel

The Creek in Peel is in need of pipe work refurbishment, and has elected to take the opportunity to install a massive fifteen hand pumps. While all will not be used outside beer festivals, there will be a dramatic increase in beer offering, with ten pumps being installed on the front bar and a further five on the back. The pubs success is such that it is struggling to serve beer fast enough during busy periods, as staff are queuing to use the existing pumps. In summer it is hoped to increase to six or so ales, plus real ciders.

Island Pub Beer Festival

Three beer festivals have been announced for April/May.

The Creek in Peel is planning on having a forty to fifty ale festival



between Thursday April 7th and Sunday April 17th, featuring bitters, porters, and stouts, followed by a mild selection during May.

The Whitehouse, Peel is holding a festival starting Saturday 16th of April, and there will be a hog roast on the Saturday at 4.30pm. There will also be thirty new ales not previously seen at the pub plus others. The festival will continue for around a week, or until the beer runs out.



This is to be a dual celebration.

■ Firstly, landlord Neil Keig is celebrating the completion of a twenty year tenure at the pub. Congratulations Neil !!!

■ Secondly there is a celebration of The Whitehouse winning a hat trick of victories as CAMRA Isle of Man Pub of The Year.

Incidentally, this year one of the four National Finalists for Pub of The Year was The Taps at Lytham. In an earlier round of voting The

Whitehouse had been eliminated by The Taps, but only by one of the narrowest of margins possible. So the Whitehouse and the IOM came within a whisker of being the North West Regional Pub of the Year and a possible National Finalist. Another reason for a beer festival!!

The Falcons Nest, Port Erin will be having a beer festival on Friday 13th, Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th May, featuring at least 25 real ales and ciders. There are offers on accommodation, beers etc. during the weekend. Food will be available. There will be a £1 entrance fee. The Falcon's Nest is a



new entrant to the growing Real Ale Pub Festivals on the Island and we wish them well with this first event.

Dave Haliwell



Peel



The skill of creating different flavours derives from the variety of hops, malts, sugar, temperature and length of brewing. Specific details of different brews are kept secret at Okells and are known only by two people. It's no surprise that this unique approach to brewing has resulted in some unique ales, which we hope you enjoy to the full during your visit to the Isle of Man. Our award winning Okells Bitter is joined by a host of speciality beers for you to try, such as Mac Lir, our light wheat beer, Dr Okells IPA, as well as Okells Red, Dr Okells Elixir and Okells Alt - among many others!

All are real ales that are pure brewed...

For more information, google **Okells Brewery**.

Better still, try the beers!



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Protecting Community Pubs

Greg Mulholland MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Save the Pub Group, has followed up on his Westminster Hall debate on pubs and planning by writing to Community Pubs Minister Bob Neill MP, on behalf of the group, outlining five steps they wish to see taken, to safeguard to future of community Pubs.



1. Planning laws to be tightened to make it harder for developers to demolish or change the use of a pub, without seeking planning permission. Current laws allow for a freestanding pub to be demolished without planning permission or any community consultation- something the Save the Pub Group believes has to change.

2. The Government should extend planning control to give councils the option to require planning permission prior to change of use, because as it stands, it is legal to

turn a pub into a betting shop, pay day loan shop, restaurant or cafe without planning permission. Supermarkets are also deliberately targeting pubs to change into smaller metro stores.

3. A strengthening of local planning policies. In 40% of local councils planning policies there is no policy in assisting the retention of community pubs. The group want to see the introduction of an independent 'viability test' to ensure that profitable, well used pubs do not close, as well as the introduction of a six month moratorium, meaning that any pub that is to close permanently is place on the market for six months, to allow prospective owners to come forward, and keep the pub running as a pub.

4. The 'community right to buy' clause, proposed in the Localism Bill, to be strengthened to mean that a community offer to buy a pub, at market value, must be considered seriously by the current owner, Greg calls for proper support to be given to Community Pub Ownership schemes through the Government's Asset Transfer Unit.



5. An end to restrictive covenants, which can be used to prevent the buyer of a pub from continuing to run the premises as a pub. A consultation into this is to take place and results of that will be published in the summer.

Commenting, Greg Mulholland said:

"The scant protection currently offered to pubs in our planning laws is nothing short of scandalous. Pubs up and down the country serve their local communities and it is not right that as things stand viable and profitable pubs are being lost with the communities they serve having a say on their future"

"The Save the Pub Group welcomes this Government's commitment to being a 'pro-pub Government. If they however wish to fulfil this commitment it is important they ensure there is adequate protection for pubs under planning law. With the Localism Bill currently making its route through Parliament, it is the perfect opportunity for the Government to do so"

"The measures I mention in my letter to the Minister, would give pubs far greater protection, but not stop cases of unprofitable and unwanted pubs closing. They would provide a simple safeguard to ensure that community Pubs have the protection they require."

Photographs © Michael Jackson

WHITE STAR

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Liverpool Pubs Remembered

The Slaughterhouse Fenwick Street

Our Correspondent "The Bounder" takes us back to the 1950s and memories of one of Liverpool's most famous pubs, the Slaughterhouse, and its very special character.

A Businessman's Pub in the City

The Slaughterhouse was very much a businessman's pub, strictly collar and tie. Women were not allowed and opening hours were limited to business hours 11.30 to 3pm, closed on Sundays. The dark wood interior and the many casks cast a distinctive almost Dickensian period atmosphere, whilst the floor

was covered with sawdust. The inner sanctum was the Half Moon Bar which was very much by invitation only and overseen by the head barman Bob.

Famous for Waitress Service

The draught beers were sold only in halves (you asked politely for "a glass of"), and were served only by waitress service. The waitresses were famed for their efficiency. Drinks were brought on a tray and cash taken with never a mistake. Helen, Winnie, Marie and Mary were as famous as the pub. Payment was taken to a teller who sat at a till high above the throng.

Beer Straight From the Cask

The Slaughterhouse was renowned for its gravity served Draught Bass and an unusual beer for Liverpool, Marston's Mild. The casks were kept cool with grass sods laid over the barrel and watered with a watering can.

There was no question of any food being served at the Slaughterhouse. This was a drinks only establishment.

Bennett's Wine and Spirits Bottlers
The Slaughterhouse was owned by Bennett's a North Wales family who ran a wine and spirit business. Casks of sherry, port and spirits were lined up behind the bar dispensed straight from the cask.

Auction Shock

The Liverpool business world was shocked at the news that Bennett's were to sell the Slaughterhouse at auction. The purchaser was the national Chef and Brewer chain which was at that time setting up steak house restaurants. Ironic that having never sold food the Slaughterhouse should become a steak house! The only link with the pub history was that the new steak house sold large schooners of sherry. Chef and Brewer proceeded to ruin the special ambience of the pub and another part of Liverpool culture was consigned to history.

Readers with memories or photographs of the Slaughterhouse please send them to merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

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Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2011

- Winners List:

Overall winners

**Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain -
Entire Stout, Hop Back (Wiltshire)**

Silver - **Chocolate**, Marble (Manchester)
Bronze - **Praetorian Porter**, Dow Bridge
(Leicestershire)

Old Ales and Strong Milds category

Gold- Chocolate, Marble (Manchester)
Silver- Old Ale, King (West Sussex)
Bronze- Dark Raven, Beowulf (Staffordshire)

Other category finalists - Shefford Old Dark (B&T,
Bedfordshire), **Father Mike's Dark Ruby** (Brunswick,
Derbyshire), **Midnight Belle** (Leeds, West Yorkshire),
Highlander (Fyne, Argyll, Scotland), **Dark &
Handsome** (Box Steam, Wiltshire), **Mwnici Nell**
(Nant, Conwy, Wales)

Porters category

Gold- Praetorian Porter, Dow Bridge (Leicestershire)
Silver- Finns Hall Porter, Beowulf (Staffordshire)
Bronze- London Porter, Red Squirrel (Hertfordshire)

Other category finalists - Old Moor Porter (Acorn,
South Yorkshire), **Smoked Porter** (Wapping,
Merseyside), **Black Galloway** (Sulwath, Dumfries &

Galloway, Scotland), **Bottle Wreck Porter**
(Hammerpot, West Sussex), **Station Porter** (Wickwar,
Gloucestershire), **Telford Porter** (Conwy, Conwy,
Wales)

Stouts category

Gold- Entire Stout, Hop Back (Wiltshire)
Silver- Smokey Joes Black Beer, Hop Star
(Lancashire)
Bronze- Nero, Milton (Cambridgeshire)

Other category finalists - Saint Petersburg
(Thornbridge, Derbyshire), **Sauce of the Niall** (Bull
Lane, Tyne & Wear), **Black Gold** (Cairngorm,
Highlands, Scotland), **Zig Zag Stout** (Milk Street,
Somerset), **Welsh Black** (Heart of Wales, Powys,
Wales), **Titanic Stout** (Titanic, Staffordshire)

Barley Wines category

Gold- Old Ale, Holden's (West Midlands)
Silver- Old Tom, Robinsons (Stockport, Cheshire)
Bronze- Hibernator, Black Isle (Ross-shire, Scotland)

Other category finalists - Tally Ho! (Adnams,
Suffolk), **Extinction Ale** (Darwin, Tyne & Wear), **Old
1066 Ale** (Goacher's, Kent), **Beast** (Exmoor,
Somerset), **High as a Kite** (Heart of Wales, Powys,
Wales)

Winter beer styles:

Porter - A dark, slightly sweetish but hoppy ale
made with roasted barley; the successor of
'entire' and predecessor of stout. Porter
originated in London around 1730, and by the
end of the 18th century was probably the most
popular beer in England.

Stout - One of the classic types of ale, a
successor in fashion to 'porter'. Usually a very
dark, heavy, well-hopped bitter ale, with a dry
palate, thick creamy, and a good grainy taste.

Old Ale - Now virtually synonymous with
'winter ale'. Most 'old ales' are produced and
sold for a limited time in the year, usually
between November and the end of February.
Usually a rich, dark, high-gravity draught ale of
considerable body.

Barley Wine - A strong, rich and sweetish ale,
usually over 1060 OG, dark in colour, with high
condition and a high hop rate.

The People's Champion Beer

Visitors to the CAMRA
National Winter Ales Festival
in Manchester were invited to
vote for their People's Beer
of the Festival.

The winner was **Liverpool
Organic Brewery Kitty
Wilkinson Stout**, a great
accolade for relatively
new brewery.

It is reported that on
receipt of the news a
Liverpool brewery had
won Sir Alex Ferguson
complained about the
referee and refused to
speak to the media.



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Entirely a Champion



Entire Stout, brewed by Hop Back Brewery, Wiltshire won the Champion Winter Beer of Britain Award at the

National Winter Ales Festival, Manchester

The 4.5% abv Stout is described in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide as 'A rich, dark stout with a strong roasted malt flavour and a long, sweet and malty aftertaste. A beer suitable for vegans.'

Nik Antona, CAMRA Director, praised the Champion Winter beer. He said:

"I would personally like to

congratulate Hop Back brewery on winning CAMRA's national award. This is not only great news for the brewery but for the beer style Stout! We hope this will revitalise 'real' stout and encourage more breweries to brew this style of beer in the future."

Steve Wright, Hop Back Brewing Director and Head Brewer was elated to hear of the brewery's success. He said:

"This is obviously fantastic news! Entire Stout has been a very successful beer for the brewery in both draught and bottle-conditioned form and to win this national CAMRA award will only encourage more real ale lovers to give it a try. We now look forward to Champion Beer of Britain competition in August."

35 beers (9 Porters, 9 Stouts, 9 Old Ales / Milds and 8 Barley

Wines) were entered into the final chosen by CAMRA branches and Tasting Panels.

The Overall Silver went to Chocolate, brewed by Marble in Manchester, whilst the Bronze medal went to Praetorian Porter, brewed in Leicestershire by Dow Bridge brewery.

A panel of beer writers, members of the licensed trade and CAMRA members judged the competition at the Sheridan Suite, Manchester.

Victorious at the Winter Ales Festival today, Entire Stout and the category Gold winners will now be entered into the final of the Champion Beer of Britain competition at the Great British Beer Festival, Earls Court, London, in August.

It takes a Frenchman to value our pubs

"If there was one thing I'd really like to import into France it is the pubs. The social mix you find in pubs is something that does not really exist in France."

Francois Fillon
 Prime Minister of France

Superb MerseyAle and Pubs Passport

"I came to Liverpool to visit some of the pubs around Dale Street. What I did find was a copy of the local CAMRA group's superb magazine MerseyAle with a copy of their Liverpool Pubs Passport. This shows 80 plus pubs in full colour with an easy to use map. Suddenly it opened up another few pubs in the area and expanded my pub crawl considerably."



Lost Lion Loco

Following our It's Just a Sign feature in the February 2011 edition on the Lion Tavern Moorfields, we received information from a reader Steamboat Willie that the News Room lounge at the Lion had for many years a large mural painting of the Lion steam locomotive on the rear wall.

Save Our Pubs

With the most recent CGA report highlighting that 29 pubs are still closing every week (thankfully and encouragingly down from the 39 a year ago). CAMRA has to do more than ever to support local pubs through these difficult times.

CAMRA's own research shows that 84% of people believe a pub is as essential to village life as a shop or post office.

Despite their popularity pubs are still under threat and need our help.

CAMRA is calling on everyone to join the Save Our Pubs campaign to put a stop to the closure of British pubs. Details see www.camra.org.uk

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Great British Beer Festival



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2-6 August 2011

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The Great British Beer Festival at Earls Court, Britain's biggest beer festival, once again brings together a wide range of real ales, ciders, perries and international beers.



Save money with advance tickets

Tickets for this year's festival are now available to purchase online through See tickets or by calling 0844 412 4640.

By purchasing advance day tickets you will receive a £2 discount on the door price and will be able to avoid the main queue on arrival.

Please note there is a £1 transaction fee per order.

Advance Day Tickets

£6 (CAMRA members) / £8 (Non-CAMRA members)

See tickets hotline: 0844 412 4640

Advance Season Tickets

£20 (CAMRA members) / £23 (Non-CAMRA members)

See tickets hotline: 0844 412 4640

Please note that a season ticket allows the holder entry into the trade session

Day Tickets (on the door)

£8 (CAMRA members) / £10 (Non-CAMRA members)

Group bookings (10+)

£7 per person (CAMRA/Non-CAMRA members)

See tickets hotline: 0871 230 5594

Visit: www.camra.org.uk

Mild Month

May is Mild Month. Liverpool and Districts CAMRA will be celebrating Mild throughout May. We will be encouraging pubs in the area to stock mild and hopefully hosting some Mild Events. Check out the website www.mersecamra.org.uk for further details.



Members Weekend and AGM 2011

Members Weekend (MW) and AGM give you our members the chance to engage in CAMRA's national campaigns and have your say. It also gives you the opportunity to take part in social attractions such as trips to breweries and outlying pubs, and gives you the chance to catch up with fellow members over your favourite pint of real ale.

This year the MW and AGM will be taking place in Sheffield at the Octagon Centre, University of Sheffield on 15 - 17 April 2011.



Punch Rearrange the Deckchairs on the Titanic Punch to Sell 2,200 Pubs

"This is a £30 million corporate finance party on the top deck of the Titanic when attention should be focused on urgent engine repairs."

A Punch bondholder, on news that the Punch plan will cost £30 million in corporate fees.

Punch Taverns is to put 2,200 of its 6,800 pubs up for sale with 500 to be sold every year over the next five years.

New Punch Chief Executive Ian Dyson has announced plans to split Punch in half, with the managed pubs to be transferred into a 3,000 strong "high quality" food led business to be called Spirit. Punch faces a £3 billion debt which many commentators believe is unsustainable and there have been

calls for the company to default on its loans.

Punch has 6,000 tenanted pubs, of which 550 will be transferred to Spirit, and the rest assessed for inclusion in the 2,200 sale. On Merseyside there are only 8 managed Punch pubs out of the 200 across the area, so it is likely many will be sold.

Punch expect that a quarter of the sale pubs will cease to be pubs and will change to other uses such as shops, offices, residential properties and even care homes.

The restructuring will cost Punch £30 million in corporate fees which has caused concern amongst shareholders (see quote above).

Many City institutions question Dyson's strategy. On three

previous occasions the Spirit Group has been merged, demerged and merged again into Punch without any discernable benefit.

"The PubCo model doesn't work. It's financial engineering in the extreme whereby they've managed to extract the maximum profit to the detriment of tenants and consumers."

Steve Corbett Fair Pint Campaign

"The so called PubCos are really property companies and very largely property speculators. Some are playing Monopoly with pubs that mean an awful lot to communities they serve."

Greg Mulholland Lib Dem MP and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Beer Group and Save the Pub campaign.

WALKS AND REAL ALE 2011

FRIDAY 15th APRIL

Hightown to Waterloo Ramble with Optional Cheap and Cheerful Meal. Possibility of Beer Festival Attendance Afterwards. 5 miles.

Meet 2.30pm at the **Hightown Hotel** near the railway station where meals are available at just £1 .01. The walk will start about 3.30pm. This is a pleasant coastal path walk which ends in Waterloo where a **Beer Festival** is taking place at Old Christ Church, Waterloo Road. Admission is £5. You can probably pay on the door but you may wish to check

www.waterloobeerfestival.com to try and get your ticket in advance.

Free admission to the festival on Sunday 17th April for those who have bought a ticket for one of the other sessions.

SATURDAY 14th MAY

Calderstones/Reynolds Park/Black Wood Circular. 4 miles.

This is a brisk walk with the option of a carvery afterwards and real ale at the **Halfway House** on Woolton Road. Meet 1.30pm at the **Mansion House**, Calderstones Park, Liverpool.

SUNDAY 5th JUNE Canal Pubs Walk:

Maghull to Burscough. 12 miles. Probably four pubs with lunch in one of them. Meet 10am at **Liverpool Central** railway station by the booking office. The walk will start from outside Maghull railway station.

FRIDAY 8th JULY Calderstones to Childwall

Abbey Ramble. 4 miles. To include Reynolds Park, Black Wood and Childwall Woods. Meet 6pm at the **Mansion House**,

Calderstones Park, Liverpool. Possibility of a meal at the end in the **Childwall Abbey** pub.

WEDNESDAY 17th AUGUST Childwall

to Woolton Ramble. 3.5 miles. The walk will leave from outside the **Childwall Fiveways** pub at 6pm. If you fancy a meal beforehand meet inside at 5pm. In all we will visit 4 pubs as we make our way to Woolton via Gateacre.

SATURDAY 27th AUGUST

Calderstones/Woolton Quarry Circular. 4 miles.

This is a brisk walk with the option of a carvery afterwards and real ale at **The Greenhills** in Allerton. Meet 1.30pm at the **Mansion House**, Calderstones Park, Liverpool.

TUESDAY 30th AUGUST Mossley Hill to

Gateacre Ramble. 3.8 miles. We will leave

from outside the **Storrdsdale pub** in Storrdsdale Road, off Mather Avenue, at 6pm. Call in there from 5.30pm if you fancy a drink in there beforehand. En route we will call at **The Elephant** in Woolton before making our way to the **Black Bull** in Gateacre where there is also the opportunity to have a meal.

SATURDAY 17th SEPTEMBER Sefton

Coastal Paths Pub Walk. 4.5 miles. Probably 5 pubs in the Waterloo and Crosby areas. Meet 12 noon outside **Waterloo railway station** in South Road.

More details from Dave Dent on **0151 738 1168**

(home), **07833590525** (mobile) or at davejdent@aol.com Website at

www.liverpoolbriskwalkers.co.uk

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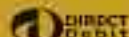
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for details visit
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To book coach trips phone
Ian Macadam on 07521 741 586
or email
social@merseycamra.org.uk
or book at
Branch Meetings

These offer the chance to visit interesting quality real ale pubs outside our area with someone else doing the driving. The coach departs at 10am prompt from Dale Street outside the Ship and Mitre and costs £12. Return is usually between 9-9.30pm. Trips are open to non members so bring a friend along.

COACH TRIPS: Saturdays

- 30th April 2011 - Long Itchington Pub festival (Warwickshire) & Pubs
- 21st May 2011 - West Yorkshire
- 11th June 2011 - Cumbria
- 9th July - Bishops Castle Festival
- 3rd September - Shrewsbury
- 8th October - Nottingham

The Peel P50
The car can be viewed at the Manx Transport Heritage Museum Peel (next to Moore's Kippers on the harbour).
See www.manxheritage.com

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The aim of our brewery is to produce hand crafted, high quality ales, beers and lagers. We live for experimentation and will continue to push the boundaries in terms of flavours, combinations

and beer styles. We use only the finest ingredients for our beers, Fawcetts Malts and Charles Faram Hops to make sure that the end product is the best that can be.

We have a number of flagship beers available and we also specialise in "house" beers with the style of beer tailored to the needs of the outlet.

We have beers available in Cask, Bottle and Party Kegs. There is also a chill filtered Real Lager coming soon. We also have beer gift packs on sale at our brewery and also in a number of outlets in the City.



At Liverpool One we are your local brewers. You will find us welcoming and approachable and with us you will get a personal friendly service. Order hotline is manned all day long for all your beer needs and our brewery is open for you to pop in for a cuppa or a swift half.

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Merseytravel Line

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Liverpool & Districts CAMRA Diary

Weds 20th April Branch AGM Election of Committee 8pm
Ship & Mitre Upstairs Room Dale St. 8pm

Weds 17th May Branch Get Together 8pm at the
Excelsior Dale Street

Weds 15th June Branch Get Together 8pm Gardeners Arms
Woolton - return coach provided leaving Ship and Mitre Dale
Street at 7.00pm

merseycamra.org.uk

Stockport CAMRA Beer Festival Thursday 2nd to Saturday 4th June 2011

As usual the Festival will be at Edgeley Park, the home of Stockport County, 15 minute walk from Stockport station.

We intend to make an even greater effort than usual (if that is possible), because this is our Silver Anniversary and we are very optimistic that we can even better the tremendous success we had in 2010. So this year we have ;

- more beer and cider than ever before, 150 beers ciders and perries
- great live entertainment lunch and evening
- hot and cold food
- a Special Festival Ale
- stalls, souvenir glasses, T-shirts and programmes
- seating for all in the football stand
- families welcome until 9.30pm
- free entry all sessions for CAMRA members
- and as usual of course a great atmosphere!

We are again supporting our festival charity, Stockport Cerebral Palsy.

We open on Thursday 5.30-11, Friday 11.30-3.30 & 5.30-11 and Saturday 11.30-4.30 & 6.30-11 and CAMRA members are free at all sessions.

More information at www.Stockportfestival.org.uk.

Advertising in MerseyAle

If you wish to place an advertisement you should contact us by email at; adverts@merseycamra.org.uk sending in your advert design and copy by attachment. Cost is £100 per half page, £200 full page payment in advance.

Opinions expressed in the Mersey Ale are not necessarily those of the Editor
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