

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Winter 2011

FREE

LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL 2012 DETAILS INSIDE

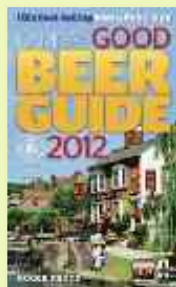


THE LION TAVERN

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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CAMRA national site
www.camra.org.uk

Cover by Dennis Jones
The MerseyAle Liverpool CAMRA
Liver Bird logo after the style of
the famous Andy Warhol silk
screen of Marilyn Monroe

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

Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle



The Good the Bad and the Ugly

The Good

Britain is enjoying a Real Ale Brewery Boom !!

Ninety nine new breweries have opened in the last twelve months and there are now 840 breweries across the country – page 26. It would take you 15 Years to drink your way through the 5,500 different beers that they produce and that is not counting seasonal beers !!

The Bad

The PubCos are driving Britain's pubs to the brink of ruin and the Government must act now to bring in a statutory code and regulation. So says a Parliamentary Select Committee in a devastating report on Britain's PubCos – page 15
Will the Government finally act?

The Ugly

Pub closures are running at the rate of 25 a week, many of them one's owned by PubCos – page 21. The ugly visible impact is closed and boarded up pubs across the country. The less visible impact is the damage done to local communities which lose their social focus with the loss of the pub.

CAMRA Campaigning – The Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain

Liverpool CAMRA is working hard to support the pubs and real ale. Read about the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign which is successfully attracting new people to try real ale and to enjoy it in its natural environment – the pub. The latest initiatives have been another successful women's real ale event (page 5) and the setting up of a University Real Ale Society supported by CAMRA (page 7). This is part of a wider initiative to attract young people to real ale and to pubs.

In September and October Liverpool CAMRA delivered the two month Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival and published the new Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Map with over 100 pubs, available free from pubs with copies of MerseyAle.

Join Us

So if you would like to be part of an active campaigning CAMRA branch then don't delay – Join Today on page 53.



John Armstrong Editor

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICTS CAMRA



Sponsored by
LIVERPOOL
ORGANIC
BREWERY

Metropolitan
Catholic
Cathedral Crypt
Brownlow Hill



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Ticket Sales
Gibberd Room
Sat 10th Dec
10 - 1pm
see details below

Thursday 16th - Saturday 18th February 2012

220+REAL ALES Plus Real Ciders and Perries

Sessions

Thursday	16th	7-11pm	
Friday	17th	12-4pm	7-11pm
Saturday	18th	12-4pm	7-11pm

Entertainment Every Session

Quality food, Wines and Snacks Available

All sessions

are **£7** includes Festival Glass and Programme

Discount for card carrying CAMRA Members in Beer Vouchers

ADMISSION BY ADVANCE TICKET ONLY

General ticket sale Saturday 10th December only

10am to 1pm at the Gibberd Room

Metropolitan Cathedral, entrance via garden on corner of Mount Pleasant

Tickets Limited to 4 per person

Postal sales open in November

For postal sales details and Liverpool CAMRA Members priority allocation see
webpage: www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

LIVERPOOL CAMRA

BRINGING NEW PEOPLE TO REAL ALE



Liverpool CAMRA is running a major campaign to Bring New People to Real Ale. Read about our latest events focusing on women and real ale (below) and on students new to the city introducing them to real ale and our excellent pubs - page 7. If you would like to find out more about these campaigns and future events email

contact@merseycamra.org.uk

Forty Women Applaud Real Ale and Food Tasting Event

Tuesday 11th October was a miserable wet evening, but that did not deter 40 women clustering together in a Liverpool pub to partake of a beer and food matching evening, presented by Anne Jones from Hawkshead Brewery who had travelled down specially for the event.

The event was organised by Liverpool and Districts CAMRA Branch as part of the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign, Hawkshead Brewery and the Dispensary pub. The Dispensary has won Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year award in both 2010 and 2011, and is increasingly appreciated by women as a welcoming, female friendly environment.

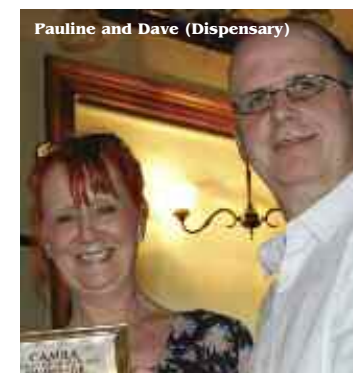
Snowballs

Since February this year the Branch has been actively campaigning to introduce more people, in particular women and young people, to real ale and good, well run real ale pubs. It has become colloquially known as the 'Snowball' campaign, as people who are invited to events bring a friend, who then in turn brings another new person to the next



Jan Sorsby, Jean Pownceby and Anne Jones Hawkshead Brewery

event, and so the word is spread. This was the second women's event to be held in the Dispensary where licensees Pauline and Dave



Pauline and Dave (Dispensary)

Williams are avid supporters of the Branch's efforts, and it was certainly a big success.

A raised area at the rear of the pub was set apart and attractively adorned with flickering tealights to welcome the (almost more than!) capacity crowd of forty women who attended. Women Branch members, Jan, Helen and Jean, together with male committee member John, the Editor of MerseyAle (collectively plus Chris and Talisha the Snowball team!),

had all been delighted and excited when Anne offered to come down from the Lake District to do this presentation and they were not disappointed!

The Beers and the Food

Anne started the evening by giving a brief history of Hawkshead Brewery, and then proceeded to take people through the brewing process, in what people later described as both a very informative and accessible manner in which her natural enthusiasm really shone through and engaged people.

They were then all well prepared for the beer and food matching that followed!

Small tasting glasses, fresh ones for each beer, were provided, together with cocktail sticks for the various cheeses that accompanied the Hawkshead bottled beers. The latter included Lakeland Gold, Organic Stout, Brodie's Prime (a porter) - this one served with chocolate, yum! - and Hawkshead Red.

Anne gave a full introduction to each 'match' and circulated amongst people to answer questions

and listen to their comments. To say it proved lively would be an understatement! There was a real buzz of animation as people shared their impressions, not only with Anne, but with each other and across the room, lots of people talking with others they had never met before as they all savoured the different tastes.

Applause

Sadly, Anne had to leave before the end of the evening for her long return journey home, but before she went, the Chair of the Branch, Geoff Edwards thanked her for an excellent evening and for coming all that way, and there was a spontaneous and enthusiastic round of applause.



Anne and an appreciative audience

Afterwards, people were able to enjoy beers at the bar, including the very popular **Hawkshead Windermere Pale** and **Hawkshead Lakeland Gold**.

Finally, it was time for everyone to wend their way home. Yes, it was still raining, but who cared? A small price to pay for such an interesting and enjoyable evening !!

Jean Pownceby

What a Good Idea !! Women and Real Ale !!!

It had seemed a very good idea at the time, the time being the celebrations at the Dispensary in July 2011 for their second consecutive Liverpool and District Pub of the Year Award. Anne Jones the Sales Manager from Hawkshead Brewery had been so enthusiastic about the first Liverpool CAMRA Womens Tasting Event (see MerseyAle Summer 2011) and the idea of holding a Real Ale and Food Matching Event at the Dispensary andwell we never pass on an opportunity to spread the real ale word, so we had agreed to a **Hawkshead Beer and Cumbrian Food Matching Event !!!**

Much in a Short Time

But the first event, our first event, at the Dispensary had been such a success, were we being foolhardy to return there? We'd done such a lot in a short time. We'd had Young People's Events, Events for

would turn up. The raised area at the Dispensary was full, everyone who had said they would attend had done. This was a testament to the effectiveness of the Snowball method. There was a definite buzz about the place, but what did they have to say?

Read on !!

"Brilliant !! Really enjoyed it

Learnt new and interesting things about beer

Enjoyable, good to see lots of people

Speaker very enthusiastic

Good to have cheese and beer together

A revelation, cheese and beer

Brilliant, the most

comprehensive explanation of brewing I have ever heard

Informative energetic speaker

Good selection of people

Informal, enjoyed the Q and A session

A really good idea

Made you think about what you were drinking

The Food and Beer match made me go Wow !!!

I've always drunk red wine with cheese before - not now! Beer with cheese has been a revelation.

Ann was inspiring - really taught us about ale... I've never tried porter, always shunned it, will definitely try it again now!

She's so energetic and dynamic... she really wanted to give us a good experience.

I'm so happy, thank you!!

New Members, as well as Women's Events and joint events. We'd had talks by a Brewster, Michelle from Offbeat Brewery



Crewe, and said Goodbye to the Everyman with a scintillating Finale. Our trade mark tea lights were quite frankly getting tired of being moved around Liverpool in a shopping bag and had longed for peace and quiet. We'd had a break over the summer would we be able to recapture our successful streak?

Success !!

Well as they say the rest is history!! We needn't have worried that no-one



Women More Fortright with Comments about Beer

Anne had wanted to do it as she enjoys being out in the trade, likes to see people and getting feedback. She feels that women are more forthright in what they say about what they like in beer tastes.

Well she won't have been disappointed there then !!!

Dave and Pauline had wanted to do it as they want to see more people drinking real ale and feel events like this are a way of introducing real ale to a non traditional prospective group of real ale drinkers.

Liverpool CAMRA wanted to do it as we believe the future is in

bringing new people to real ale and growing the demand for quality real ales.

Anne left at 9.30 to return home. The group were still there at last orders, still chatting, still forming new friendships, and still saying what a good time they had had.

"It was such a friendly atmosphere, a real community feel. The Dispensary is the ideal setting, glad she wanted to do it here"

And so were we.

Yes we were right to return, it was a success. Look out tea lights I think you are in for a busy autumn. Jan Sorsby



Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign

A Fresh Start - University Real Ale Society Launched

On the Sunday morning of the Liverpool University Fresher's Fair, my housemate Rachel and I clawed our way out of bed looking more like a pair of stray cats than Liverpool's Premier Ginger Women (lol!). Or, should I say, Liverpool's Premier Real Ale Recruitment Team.

After a series of hangover-related disasters, including the

student classics of 'missed the bus' and 'the dog ate my alarm', we bounced up to the student union topped up with cup-a-soups- just about holding them down.

In case we weren't feeling queasy enough, the first thing that greeted us after we stepped out of our limo (emergency taxi) was the face of equally hung-over CAMRA photographer, Neil. "I've looked everywhere! I can't find them!" he cried, while we stuffed free Dominos pizza vouchers into our

bags, struggling to maintain an air of dignity.

From Supermarket Sweep to CAMRA Real Ale Stall

After a two minute game of supermarket sweep-up-the-best-freebies, we descended on Louise and Gray (our new RealAle Soc team, after Greg and Aled jumped ship just after the last MerseyAle went to print), and the towering figure of everyone's favebabe and CAMRA Young Person's Officer, Chris Flynn.

Limited by University regulations (boooo), Flynny wasn't allowed to set up a cask of real ale on the stall. However, using his flair for ensnaring the young ones, he had already thought of the smart alternative of having the cask in the Augustus John pub - spitting distance from the Fair - and handing out free beer vouchers for our eager academics to cash in later. The stall was in the 'James Brown' Room (WTF?) tucked away at the back and just wasn't delivering us the number of students we'd hoped for. So the Ginger Dream Team 'got up offa that thing' *shudder* and went hunting for fresh blood with pockets stuffed full of sweet, sweet promises (and beer vouchers !!)



Louise, Zoe, Grey and Chris

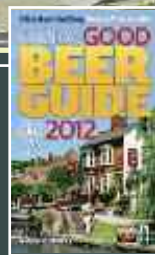
Welcome to the Vernon Arms

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
Friday & Sunday

Loose Moose Bluegrass
Sundays fortnightly at 8pm

FOOD Homemade
Meals Mon-Fri 12-3pm
Sat & Sun 12-6

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
Opening times Sat-Mon 12-12, Tues - Thurs 12-11 Friday 12-1pm

"FREE BEER, ANYONE?" came the call that seemed to bounce off the heads and bags of thousands of bleary-eyed students as they began to swarm around us, hands raised up in zealous adoration, prostrating themselves at the feet of the ones who held the golden tickets. Our pens zoomed across our papers, practically throwing up sparks as names and email addresses poured forth in a show of quasi-religious fervour.

"I brew beer with my Dad at home", one enthusiastic first year student said as Neil made his teeth sparkle with the flash of a Nikon camera, so I seized my chance to tell him about our RASoc competition prize of helping to craft the CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival brew at one of our Liverpool breweries. "I'm gonna win", he yodelled, as we watched his head bob through crowds, "See you at the AJ later!"

At the AJ

...And what a turn out it was! The front of the Augustus John looked like a real ale advert (not a Hobgoblin t-shirt though!) with the slanting September sun making the halves of Liverpool Organic Iron Men look like glowing glasses of ambrosia. Students and workers alike felt their hangovers evaporate in a cloud of community spirit and 4% ale.

Cider and Perry Too !!

Just as we were settling down with our own hair-of-the-dogs, generously provided by the one and only Flynny as a thank you for helping out - out came CAMRA Cider favourites Lynda and Sandy



ready to host a real cider tasting session! So Rachel and I - feeling just a bit better than we had that morning - rounded off our fun-filled day with samples of real perry and cider that matched our hair, before wandering off to collect our free Dominos pizzas, our faces covered in smiles.

Zoe Manning

University Real Ale Society

To find out about the Society and its impressive programme of events including;

- Real Ale Treasure Trail based on the CAMRA Liverpool Real ale Pubs Map with the prize of brewing the CAMRA 2012

Liverpool Beer Festival special beer at a Liverpool brewery.

- Real Ale Student Social with live music
 - Liverpool Real Ale Pub Crawl - discover the best pubs in Liverpool
 - Opportunity to work a session at the Liverpool Beer Festival in February
 - Low cost membership of CAMRA
- Email youngpersons@merseycamra.org.uk or alesocest.2011@gmail.com



WOMEN AND REAL ALE

There's Something Brewsting ! Project Venus



Brewsters, (the medieval word for women brewers), have started **Project Venus**, a group of the UK and Ireland's best Brewsters who all want to brew together to make something really special! The initial idea was Sara Barton's from **Brewster's Brewery** in Grantham. Sara set up the brewery in 1998 initially on her parent's farm in the Vale of Belvoir. Sara was one of the first wave of British women brewers hence the name of the brewery. A graduate of the brewing degree course at Herriott Watt University she subsequently worked for Courage before starting her own brewery, Brewster's.



2011). One of the members of Project Venus, Michelle Kelsall of **Offbeat Brewery** in Crewe introduced her own beers and also the first Project Venus beer. The beer was very well received by all present. The plan is for other Project Venus beers to follow at other breweries through the year. The recipe was put together with input from all the brewsters (communicating via Facebook!). The Project is a reminder that in medieval times it was women who did the brewing at home both for family consumption and wider sale. Recent years have seen a rapid increase in the numbers of women working in the brewing industry in both large brewing companies and in micros, especially on the brewing and

production side. You could say it is a case of Back to the Future !!

- **One in Six real ale drinkers is female**
- **The number of female real ale drinkers has doubled in recent years**

Figures from Cask Report 2011 - 12

Women and Beer Britain Lags Behind

Despite the fact that more women are enjoying cask ale more than ever before, British women don't enjoy the nation's favourite tippie anywhere near as much as our friends across Europe or over in the US. 13% of 'beer serves' in Britain were to women, compared to the following

25%	USA
36%	Republic of Ireland
24%	Italy
44%	Spain
61%	Turkey (!)

Figures from The Bittersweet Partnership (Molson Coors).

As an aside the MerseyAle Editor gave Sara her first publicity with a feature in Leicester Drinker which he then edited. A chance meeting in the then Vaults in Leicester when Sara was delivering her first beers led to a story. Having come across an article on **The Pink Boots Society**, a US group promoting women in brewing, Sara decided we needed something similar in the UK. Taking the bull by the horns Sara decided to start a group called Project Venus, and made a call to arms to all female

brewers to collaborate on a brew, to show off female brewing at its best! The task of getting everyone together at the same time and place was a tricky one and the brewsters decided on a series of brews using roughly the same recipe but with 'local variations'



The inaugural brew **Venus Jade** was produced in March at Sara's brewery and was available at the Lion Tavern / Liverpool CAMRA Meet the Brewster evening held in April (see MerseyAle Summer



MerseyAlenews

Pints Ahoy !!

The Bar Light Ship moored in Albert Dock is now open and has a bar serving Liverpool One beers, making it arguably Liverpool's most unusual pub.



Ship and Mitre Opens Whitechapel Bottle Shop

The Ship and Mitre is to open a new venture at the beginning of November, a Bottle Shop off license next to Café Nero on Whitechapel. The shop will be laid out with eight bays of beer shelving organised as follows;

- 2 bays for real ale and UK beers
- 2 bays for German beers
- 2 bays of Belgian beers
- 1 bay USA beers
- 1 bay wines and spirits

The space can accommodate 450 different beers but the intention is to open with around 250 and steadily build up the range.

A specialist beer shop is something Liverpool has long lacked so the venture should fill a real gap in the market.

50 Up at Ship and Mitre

Two Weeks Two Hundred Beers
The Ship and Mitre November Real Ale Festival (November 23rd - December 6th) will be the 50th organised by the Ship. To celebrate it will run over TWO weeks and offer TWO HUNDRED Beers.

Ship and Mitre Burning Kitchen Food

The food franchise at the Ship changed in September and is now known as the Kitchen

Willowbank Tuesday Real Ale Promotion

The newly refurbished Willow Bank Smithdown Road continues to offer four real ales midweek and up to seven at weekends. The 'Tuesday Real Ale Promotion' offers 10% off a pint of real ale all day. All Liverpool matches are shown live via overseas satellite channel.

Stamps Crosby

Has opened its own brewery in Bank Hall to brew beers for the pub. Trial brews A and B appeared in Stamps in October for customer feedback which it must be said was



not favourable - so work on the beers continues.

The Stables St Mary's Road Garston

This pub which closed last year has become an Indian Restaurant. Another pub lost.

Woolton Gardeners Arms - New Licensee

The Gardeners Arms has a new licensee Liz Goldsmith with partner Brad Hardy who were previously at the Village Inn in Woolton for a number of years. The Gardeners Arms is now part of the Best Pub Co which is owned by Tony Murray from Woolton. The company own eight pubs around the Merseyside area. Liz and Brad have had a great deal of experience in the bar trade as they owned a number of bars

around the Costa del Sol area of Spain for 22 years.

Their future real ale plans for the Gardeners is to continue to have five real ales with constantly changing guest beers and also featuring local beers from the Liverpool area.

MerseyAle would like to wish Liz & Brad good luck with their new venture and encourage real ale fans to pay the Gardeners Arms a visit and give reports on beers to merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

Pub Closure in City Centre

The Officers Mess Victoria Street has closed following a dispute over rental levels.

Two Southport GBG Pubs Facing Major Upheaval Baron's Bar Britannia- ised "Just Drink Will Yer"

Baron's Bar at the Scarisbrick Hotel Lord Street Southport has been taken over by Britannia Hotels group following the sale of the hotel by the long standing private family owners. Baron's has been a regular GBG entry and several times winner of the Southport CAMRA



Branch Pub of the Year award. The bar claimed to have the largest range of real ales in Southport.

An immediate consequence of the Britannia takeover has been the departure for pastures new of respected bar manager

THE DISPENSARY

CAMRA Pub of the Year 2011



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 and 2011) 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



MerseyAlenews continued

George Sowerbutts, who built the Baron's reputation for real ale and stocking beers from micro and regional brewers. The new regime appears to be limiting choice to mainstream national beers from the Carlsberg Tapsters list.

Interviewed by the Southport Visitor, George commented;

"It was exciting because there was a real heart to the place. After 14 years I had achieved an awful lot there. All the awards we have won and that were exciting - that's what motivated me each year.

I think it's what drove me over the years in the Baron's Bar because I always wanted to improve. A lot of the time the rewards were unexpected and it is always nice when you get them. When Britannia came it was going to be inevitable that things were going to change. We were not going to be able to offer the same service."

Britannia Hotels is the owner of

the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Readers may recall the fly on the wall TV series on the Adelphi in which the catch phrase "Just Cook Will Yer" became (in)famous.

Greene King Set To Wreck Freshfield Community Pub



Shock news in September was that **Greene King** is set to turn the very popular GBG listed community pub the Freshfield into a gastro pub/restaurant and knock through the interior. The plans have caused

a storm of protest as the Freshfield is the area's one remaining community pub and is valued greatly by residents in this well heeled area. A petition was quickly organised and press publicity gained.

Some years ago a similar scheme by Bass ruined the **Bay Horse** in Formby despite a protest campaign, and many feel that the area has enough food led pubs and restaurants. Greene King became infamous for their take over of the historic **Lewes Arms** and decision

to drop the favourite Harvey's Bitter in favour of Greene King beers, leading to a nationally reported boycott of the pub. Result - retreat of stout King!

Will Greene King never learn !!

Rainhill Rotary Club

9th BEER FESTIVAL

Thursday 10th November 2011
7pm - 11pm

Friday 11th November 2011
7pm - 11pm

Saturday 12th November 2011
1pm - 11pm

Free entry to Ladies before 4pm

£5 entry (includes commemorative glass)

Food and Snacks Available

NEW VENUE.....NEW VENUE.....NEW VENUE

AT RAINHILL RECREATION CLUB
(RAINHILL CRICKET CLUB)

Website address.....www.rainhillbeerfest.org

Contact us at info@rainhillbeerfest.org for further information

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**



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

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



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.

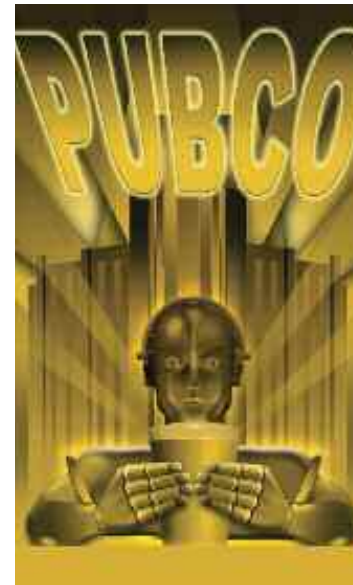


There are **3 hand pumps serving a variety of Local and Regional Ales**

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

New Pub **Victoria Cross** Victoria St. See MerseyAle News



PubCos are "an industry which has for too long failed to put its own house in order."

Self Regulation has Failed – Committee Calls for Statutory PubCo Code of Practice

In September the House of Commons Business and Innovation Select Committee (BISC) published a damning report on the PubCos that between them own 37% of Britain's pubs. It states that PubCos have wasted their last chance to deal with the issues themselves, continuing to drink in the Last Chance Saloon with reform moving at a "glacial" pace.

This is the fourth critical report on the Pubcos in seven years and **BISC Chairman Adrian Bailey MP for West Bromwich West commented;**

"Each report challenged the industry to deliver meaningful reform. On every occasion the industry was found wanting. The third report in 2010 delivered a final ultimatum to the industry: eighteen months to show that they were

Select Committee Publishes Damning Report on PubCos

working successfully within the voluntary code. That has passed, and the evidence is that they are not. The message now can only be: three strikes and you're out. We are firmly of the view that statutory regulation should only be



Adrian Bailey MP

used as a last resort, but we can only conclude that industry self-regulation has failed. We fully realise the implications of our recommendations and we have not come to this decision lightly. But we see no other alternative for an industry which has failed to put its own house in order."

Beer Tie

The BISC is particularly critical of the Beer Tie used by the PubCos through which licensees are forced to buy most of their beer from the PubCo at prices much higher than those available on the open market. CAMRA have estimated that PubCo licensees and through them the customer, are paying up to 45% more than non tie pubs who can buy on the open market. The Committee found that the PubCos were offering only 16% of new lessees and just 9% of existing lessees a lease free of beer tie.

Bullying and Intimidation by PubCos

The Committee reported that it was concerned that it had received "far too many unpleasant reports across the industry of bullying and intimidation towards lessees."

Time for Government to Act

The Select Committee is clear that now is the time for the Government to act.

"The position of the previous Government - endorsed by the current Government — was that if we so recommended, it would consult on how to put the Framework Code on a statutory footing.

"It is now time for the Government to act on that undertaking. In its response to our Report, the Government must set out the timetable for that consultation and begin the process as a matter of urgency."

"We further recommend that the consultation includes proposals for a statutory Code Adjudicator armed with a full suite of sanctions. Considering the amount of evidence gathered by us and our predecessor Committees this



should not be a lengthy process; and given the Government's undertaking to us we do not anticipate any meaningful delay.

"Furthermore, we caution the Government that offering a compromise of non-statutory intervention would be a departure



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from its undertaking to us and would not bring about the meaningful reform that is needed."

Damning Assessment of British Beer and Pubs Association

The Select Committee Report delivered a damning assessment of the British Beer and Pub Association's role. "The BBPA has shown itself to be impotent in enforcing its own timetable for reform and the supposed threat of removing the membership of pub companies who did not deliver was hollow." The BBPA members account for two thirds of Britain's 52,500 pubs.

PubCos Mised Lessees

Brian Binley MP for Northampton South and the Vice Chairman of the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee was concerned by the extent to which PubCos have misled lessees.

"I have had a huge number of e-mails and letters from publicans up and down the Country providing me with examples of where PubCos have intentionally misled tenants and it is important that we act now to save more pubs from going to the wall."

"Pubs and clubs in Britain are at the very heart of our communities which provides a form of social interaction which is almost unique to anywhere else in the world and we are losing them at an alarming rate with 25 pubs a week closing."

"It is of vital importance that the Government holds its promise of

consulting to put the code of practice on a statutory footing without delay or a lengthy process, and I was encouraged by the Secretary of State's positive response to that question when I questioned him during the evidence sessions."

What CAMRA Said
Mike Benner, CAMRA chief executive, said:



"Too many of the UK's pubs are blighted by the actions of the large pub companies whose business model has been so reliant on exploiting a position of power to the cost of pub licensees, communities and the consumer."

"The committee's recommendations seek an end to barriers to growth in the pub sector, a culture of inflexibility and artificially inflated beer prices. We now urge the Government to show it's on the consumer's side by following through on its promise to take action on the back of these recommendations."

"A statutory code with a powerful

adjudicator will mean lower pub prices for consumers and fewer pub closures. CAMRA last week published new data showing that nearly double the number of tied pubs are closing compared to free of tie pubs."

What Save the Pub Said
Save the Pub Group chair and Lib Dem MP Greg Mulholland said:

"For companies who are supposed to have reformed themselves, the report is devastating."

"It not only shows that pub owning companies, who are really just property companies, continue to take more from pubs than is reasonable or fair; but the report also shows that some companies are actually misleading potential tenants, which is a disgrace and something Ministers should investigate."

He added: "It is time to right the fundamental wrong of the Beers Order in allowing property companies to own and exploit so many of Britain's pubs. It is time to free the pub sector and to give the pub back to the people who run them and who rely on them."



Liverpool CAMRA Coach Trips for 2012
more details will be in the next issue of MerseyAle

7th January Frodsham Winter Beer Festival and pubs £8 NOTE 11am depart

Thursday 19th January CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival £8 - Thursday evening 6pm

4th February Pendle Beer Festival at Colne Lancashire £12 - 10am

10th March Sheffield £12 - 10am

14th April Black Country £12 - 10am

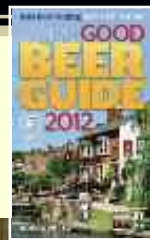
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The Rise of the PubCos

**Pubs operate under many
different forms of ownership
and management, ranging from
independent free houses to
pubs owned by large PubCos.**

The whole way in which pubs are
owned and operated has changed
significantly in the last 20 years
and it is worth recalling how that
change came about.

The Big Six

Over the course of the previous
century, the number of breweries
in Britain fell from 6,290 to just 115
by 1989.

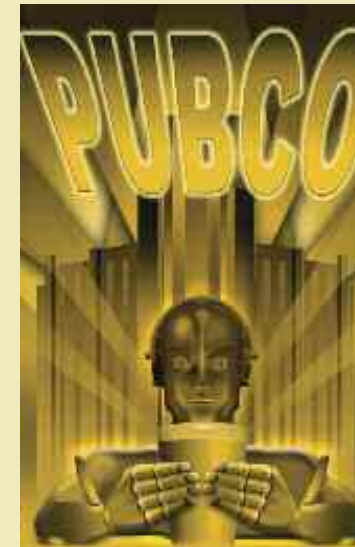
By the end of the 1980s, over 75 per
cent of Britain's beer was produced
by just six large brewers: **Allied,
Bass Charrington, Courage and
Scottish, Newcastle, Watney
Mann, and Whitbread.**

These national brewers also owned
half of the country's pubs,
meaning that most pubs were 'tied'
to a big brewer and could only sell
that brewer's beer.

Thatcher's 1989 Beer Orders

In 1989, the Monopolies and
Mergers Commission (MMC)
concluded that this vertical
integration of the industry, with
the big brewers controlling most of
the pubs, constituted a monopoly,
reducing consumer choice and
working against the public
interest. It proposed that the
brewers' monopoly over the pub
estate should be broken up to
encourage competition and reduce
retail prices.

Margaret Thatcher backed the
MMC's recommendations and
passed the 1989 Beer Orders. These
meant that brewers owning any
more than 2,000 pubs either had to
sell their brewery business or
dispose or free from tie half the
number of pubs owned over the
2,000-pub threshold.



This was a revolutionary act that
transformed the structure of the
pub trade, **but it did not have the
consequences anticipated by
the government.**

Instead of leading to a world of
independent lessees free of beer
ties, the brewers merely divested
their pub estate to stand-alone pub
companies, which were free to own
as many pubs as they wanted
because they did not brew any
beer. The pubs formerly owned by
the large brewers were almost
entirely put into the hands of these
new PubCos.

Ownership type

**19 PubCos Owned 51% of
Britain's Pubs**

By 2009, PubCos owned 51 per
cent of the pubs in the UK – the
four largest PubCos owned 33 per
cent, with Enterprise Inns and
Punch Taverns owning 27 per cent
between them. Of the remaining
pub stock, 16 per cent were owned
by small or regional brewers and
33 per cent were free houses.

In most cases, the PubCos let out
their pubs to lessees who run their
own business on long-term leases,

although around 6,000 are
managed directly by the PubCo. In
addition to paying rent, PubCo
tenants normally have to purchase
almost all of their drinks stock
from the PubCo. This relationship
has become increasingly fraught
as economic conditions have
worsened and PubCo beer prices
have increased.

Lessees and Customers Pay 50 to 70% More

It has become apparent to many
lessees that, if they were able to do
so, they could buy their beer more
cheaply on the free market. In fact,
in response to a super-complaint
made by CAMRA, the Office of
Fair Trading concluded that the
price charged by PubCos to tied
lessees for draught beer is 40–45
per cent higher than the price paid
for beer by free houses in the
open market.

CAMRA had argued that this price
differential is actually in the range
of 50–70 per cent (OFT 2010).

It is worth emphasising that the
bulk of these PubCo pubs are
community pubs, serving local
residential areas, although some
will also be town and city-centre
circuit bars or branded chain pubs.

Who Owns What

Number of outlets	2009	2011
Enterprise Inns	7,581	6,800
Punch Taverns	7,287	6,320
Admiral Taverns	2,386	1,650
Marston's	1,932	1,700
Greene King	1,428	1,300
Scottish & Newcastle Pub		
Enterprises	1,205	2,000
Wellington	1,028	850

Extract from "Tied Down: The Beer
Tie and its Impact on Britain's Pubs"
published by the Institute of Public
Policy Research (ippr).

The Turks Head

St Helens CAMRA
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PubCo pubs closing fastest

Nine tied pubco pubs close every week, compared to five free-of-tie pubs — that's the bleak picture painted by the Campaign for Real Ale's Good Beer Guide.

The Guide reports that two pubs are closing every day and claims that the number of tied pubs has fallen by 3,216 since December 2008 because "large pub companies have failed to support their licensees through tough times".

The number of free of tie pubs in that period increased by 425, according to the figures compiled by CGA. CAMRA said free market reforms are required to secure the future of small tied pubs. It is calling for all licensees to be given a free of tie option, accompanied by an open market rent review while publicans who choose to stay tied should be given a guest ale right.

"These figures show a spiralling decline in the tied pub sector, brought about by big pubcos squeezing their licensees with high beer prices and creating an environment where many publicans are unable to invest in their businesses," said Guide editor Roger Protz.

"While many tied publicans struggle in the face of high rents and excessive beer prices, free of tie owners are faring better in the current climate with the ability to offer greater beer choice, lower prices and a better pub environment to the consumer."



"Free of tie pubs, managed pubs and tied pubs run on a more sustainable basis by the family brewers are much more likely to survive and continue serving communities long into the future. Such successful businesses take pride of place in the Good Beer Guide 2012 and serve as models for the future in helping to preserve Britain's iconic beer and pub industry."



From Pubco to Tesco Horseshoe Hotel Whiston

No greater problem

However, British Beer and Pub Association chief executive Brigid Simmonds said: "Pub closures are no greater a problem in the tenanted sector than elsewhere."

It pointed to the Office of Fair Trading's rejection of CAMRA's super-complaint. The OFT said that "consumers benefit from considerable competition and choice between pubs and that this competition prevents the beer tie from being used to inflate pub beer prices beyond competitive levels". The OFT report also said: "The OFT also concluded that the beer tie has not prevented tied pubs from offering a wide choice of beers to consumers, having found



Quarry Inn Huyton

© Gary (The Lost Pubs Project)

that pub-owning companies generally source beer from a considerable range of suppliers, including smaller brewers." Simmonds added: "Pub companies have introduced new voluntary codes of practice on their tied agreements, and it is not accurate to suggest that pub companies have failed to support licensees through tough times.

"They have provided £265 million of support to pubs in 2010. A recent survey by CGA also showed that 89% of new entrants are aware of the advice and business support now available and 83% of these have taken advantage of it."

Ewan Turney

THE GRAPES

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Tied Down

CAMRA Welcomes New IPPR Report

CAMRA has welcomed a new report published by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) - "Tied Down: The Beer Tie and its Impact on Britain's Pubs".

The report confirms CAMRA's concerns that the beer tie is contributing to the closure of 25 pubs every week. Following extensive research including a survey of more than 550 publicans, the report concludes that:

- Tied publicans earn significantly less than free of tie publicans
- Tied publicans are much more likely to say they are struggling financially
- Tied publicans who are struggling financially see the beer

tie as one of the most significant factors in contributing to their financial problems

The report also details how the current operation of the tie by pub companies limits the commercial freedoms of tied publicans, and



means that they have to pay more for beer than free of tie operators. CAMRA believes that this is the underlying reason as to why tied lessees are unable to compete with free of tie pubs on prices, and subsequently struggle to make profit and can be forced to close.

The IPPR report calls on the Government to act to reform the way the industry operates. The report also considers it seriously concerning that a significant proportion of publicans are being put under serious financial pressure.

Jonathan Mail, CAMRA's Head of Policy & Public Affairs, said:

"This report highlights the crippling burden imposed on tied publicans by the very large pubcos in the form of excessive rents and inflated beer prices linked to long term commercial leases. The failure of the large pubcos to operate the beer tie in a fair and proportionate manner is pushing far too many tied publicans over the edge resulting in unnecessary pub closures. As a result local areas lose a valued hub of community life and pub goers suffer from reduced competition and choice."

"In stark contrast to the large pubcos the family brewers have supported their tied publicans through tough times by sticking to fair traditional tenancy agreements and this is reflected in the very small number of family brewer pub closures."

Government Must Intervene to Stop Tragedy of Beer Orders

"Beer Orders have proved to be a complete disaster."

The Government must intervene to solve the "tragedy" of the Beer Orders, claims Liberal Democrat MP Greg Mulholland, Chair of the Save the Pub Group. Greg Mulholland argued that it is now time for the Government to fix the issues created by the orders - which limited the number of pubs owned by breweries. The result was the creation of major pub companies such as Enterprise Inns and Punch. He told MPs present at the meeting "it (Beer Orders) has

proved to be a complete disaster."

He argued it is now time to free the pub sector from the current pub ownership structure which he claimed "has stifled" the sector and which "strangles and destroys entrepreneurship, innovation and flair."

However, the pub sector had seen some success stories despite the difficulty of the recession and the challenges represented by the beer-tie, he claimed. "There are increasing examples of pubs which have been going through a bad time for a period or indeed for a long time which are being taken on and bought from the large pub owning companies," he said. "They are being rejuvenated and transformed in terms of business

potential. I think it is a very exciting development.

"Good pubs that offer customers what they want will succeed even in difficult times."

There is a problem, however, in the lack of protection for pubs under planning law. He raised concern about "restrictive covenants by the back door" - where a PubCo instructs an agent not to sell the property as a pub. He is also concerned about "predatory purchasing" where a viable pub is sold for alternative use. He believes this is becoming more common as the major PubCos, who are in debt, are willing to offload viable pubs because they are offered good money for the site.



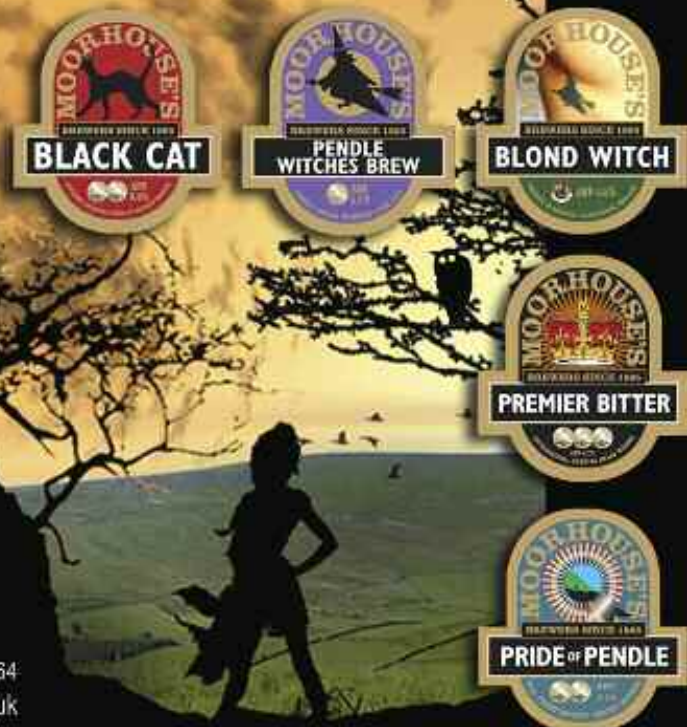
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Wetherspoons Chairman Challenges Tax on Pubs

Announcing the annual financial results, JD Wetherspoon Chairman Tim Martin challenged the Coalition Government about the high level of tax on pubs which was "creating a serious and unsustainable competitive disadvantage for pubs" compared with supermarkets

He called on the Chancellor to rein back VAT on bars and restaurants, in line with similar measures taken to aid struggling major employers in the service sector in France and Ireland. He also used the platform of the company's full-year results presentation to attack what he saw as the unfair advantages supermarkets enjoyed in alcohol sales over pubs.

He stated; **"The biggest danger to the pub industry is the tax disparity between supermarkets and pubs, creating a serious and unsustainable competitive disadvantage. In addition, our pubs pay far higher VAT than those of our nearest neighbours, Ireland and France, as well as having the second highest rates of excise duty on beer and wine in Europe."**

In May, drinks industry leaders wrote to the Chancellor complaining that beer duty had risen by 52% since 2004. The Labour government introduced a beer duty escalator in 2008 which increases the levy by 2% on top of inflation each year. The escalator has another two years to run.



by Dennis Jones



That is the message on some of the tables in Bier the recently opened real ale and world beer bar on Newington (between Bold Street and Renshaw Street) in the City Centre, Bier appears to have caught the attention of a keen clientele which includes a number of young people attracted to the beer range and the unusual interior.

Previously the Rope Walks, before that a pub called the Newington, the interior has had a major make over and redesign. It has emerged with wooden boarding in a sage green colour scheme on the lower part of the walls and white toilet style tiling on the upper part plus plenty of mirrors. The space is in a zig zag which creates separate sitting areas and a degree of privacy, including a raised platform area – a clever idea. Tables and chairs are in a contemporary wooden style supplemented by the sage green circular ones with the Real Ale Right Now logo and the floor is polished wood. There are also tables on the pavement.



The bar is along the wall next to the door with plenty of standing room in front. The bar sports a row of six hand pumps, one of which is used for a real cider. On a recent visit the regular beers were **Taylor's Landlord and Greene King Abbot, plus Roosters Yankee, Moorhouses Pride of Pendle and Ringwood Boondog.** The beers are on the pricey side for Liverpool being in the £3.20 to £3.40 range. The bar is producing a list of its 80 or so World Bottled Beers, which include about 30 Belgian (including some interesting beers from micro breweries and Trappiste beers), around 8 German beers including the range from Weihenstephan, and a handful from the USA.

Food is the increasingly popular Pieminister Pies from Bristol (see Feb MerseyAle p10) which are £4.75 plus £1 each for mash, peas and gravy. The range of pies is displayed on a chalk board.

This is an interesting bar which will stir debate about its design and styling, no doubt helped along by a pint of real ale.

Welcome back Bier !!

Real Ale Revival

The Guardian G2 30th August

Against all the odds, real ale is a happening industry.

People are really getting it:

40% more people are trying ale than were five years ago.

17% more 18-to 24-year-olds drank real ale last year than in 2010.

"When you think, only 10 years ago people were saying this would never be more than a niche product. This is a real renaissance."

Mike Benner, CEO of the Campaign for Real Ale comments;

"Real ale has flavour. And real ale is obviously part of a whole broader trend in food and drink for authenticity, tradition, localism, provenance. But, ultimately, it's about the sheer variety of styles, and the richness of the flavours."

Jeanette James, 26, a marketing executive from Putney, south-west London commented:

"Beer's every bit as rewarding and complex as wine, but no one's dared say it until now. There are really delicate, elegant flavours out there now. I don't drink a lot of it, but I really, really appreciate what I do."



by Dennis Jones

You wanna try it one day grandad, it's called Real Ale

"The common perception of real ale used to be that it was just bitter – what grandad drank, the preserve of men in thick woolly jumpers," says Benner. "It's just not true any more. There are flavours of every kind, for every palate, and people are really getting it: 40% more are trying ale than were five years ago. When you think, only 10 years ago people were saying this would never be more than a niche product."

This is a real renaissance

About Joining CAMRA

being told that being a member of CAMRA was like taking your local out with you - you were always amongst friends.

Jan Sorsby

Real Ale: Natural Flavoursome and Just a Bit Cool

The Cask Report 2011-12



A new report has highlighted real ale's appeal to a new audience of younger, affluent and sociable drinkers, making it a 'lifeline' for pubs struggling to stay afloat.

The Cask Report 2011-12 is written annually by beer writer Pete Brown and backed by CAMRA, SIBA, Cask Marque, IFBB, and major British brewers. It aims to give a practical and factual look at real ale. This year it shows how real ale continues to outperform the overall UK beer market, with signs that the category is moving back into growth.

Headline figures of the Report include

- 2,500 new pubs and clubs started to sell cask ale last year - a 4% increase in distribution
- A total of 7.8 million people drink cask ale in the UK - an 11% increase since 2007. One in five people who drink alcohol will drink cask ale at some point.
- The number of 18-24 year old cask ale drinkers increased for the second year running and the number of women drinkers has doubled since 2008
- One in six real ale drinkers are female
- Cask ale is recruiting new drinkers: 37% of current drinkers tried it for the first time within the last 10 years and 10% within the past 12 months.
- Try Before You Buy Tasting is important – 42% of people who have never drunk real ale would do so if allowed to taste it first.
- A consumer survey found that real ale is regarded by many young people as a "Cool" drink to choose.

This year's Report is aimed at publicans who stock real ale or are considering stocking it. A section **"How to Maximise Real Ale Sales: A Ten Point Plan"** gives clear practical guidance to publicans and brewers.

MerseyAle will examine the Report in more detail in a future edition.

Brewery news

99 Breweries

opened across Britain over the past 12 months!

- 'Golden Era' sees Britain boast 840 breweries now in production!
- 1047 new pub entries make it into nation's best-selling beer and pub guide

CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2012 has heralded a 'golden era' for British brewing after new research has found 99 new breweries having opened across the nation over the past 12 months.

Radical growth in the sector now takes the total number of breweries to 840 across Britain!

Today's new growth figures are symbolised by counties such as Cheshire, which in the space of just 12 months has seen 12 new breweries crop up in the area, almost doubling the number of brewers operational (from 14 in 2010, to 26 in 2012).

Meanwhile, further expansion in real ale hotspot Yorkshire means there are now a staggering 98 breweries in the region.

Today's research from Britain's best selling beer and pub guide comes at a time when the number of drinkers around the nation having tried real ale has risen by 40% in just 5 years.

On discovering 99 new breweries having opened in Britain over the past year, Roger Protz, CAMRA Good Beer Guide editor, said:

'To see one shy of a hundred new brewers coming on stream in Britain

in just 12 months is totally unprecedented, particularly during a time of economic downturn! Even for the most dedicated real ale drinker, the rate of new commercial breweries is becoming almost impossible to keep up with. This truly is a golden era for British brewing, and it's little wonder more consumers than ever are getting acquainted with real ale in the face of so much choice.'

15 years to drink your way through Britain's Beer Boom !!

- **Just under 5,500 beers are now in regular production across Britain**
 - Boom time for British brewing means drinking 'a beer a day' would take just under 15 years!
 - **Yorkshire brewers top the charts with over 600 beers regularly produced in region**
- CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2012 findings show there are just fewer than 5,500 beers now in regular production across Britain.



Roger Protz (centre) at Moorhouses new brewery with David Grant MD and Chairman Bill Parkinson

Guide editor, Roger Protz, has proposed that if a real ale fan were to drink every beer now regularly produced in Britain at a rate of one a day (to stay within responsible

drinking guidelines), it would take him/her just short of **15 years** to try them all! This does not even take into consideration the few thousand extra seasonal and one off brews that British brewers churn out during the course of a calendar year.

Roger Protz said: *'The choice and diversity of beer in Britain is literally staggering, and in reality, if one hardy soul was to attempt the challenge of sampling every beer produced in Britain, including seasonal offerings, you're going to be looking at an estimated 15 year stretch!*

'Such a range is exactly what discerning beer drinkers expect in the current climate, and in spite of economic difficulties and pub closures, Britain's pioneering brewers are more than rising to the challenge. Never will anyone alive today have seen 5,500 regular beers produced on these shores at any one time.'

Real Ale Hotspot Premier League of Brewing - Yorkshire !!

To show this huge growth in the number of beers now regularly produced around Britain, CAMRA's Good Beer Guide has produced a league table of the most prolific brewing counties.

While Yorkshire as a whole sweeps away all competition with over 600 regular beers brewed in total, West Yorkshire comes up trumps as a single area with a whopping

276 beers permanently produced by the county's 43 brewers.

The league's top 10 comprises the following counties. For a comprehensive list of the number of beers in regular production in every county, please visit www.camra.org.uk/gbgmediastats. (PDF Download)

County	Beers in Regular Production	Breweries in County
1. West Yorkshire	276	43
2. Derbyshire	248	33
3. Cumbria	220	29
4. Norfolk	217	29
5. North Yorkshire	216	33
6. Greater Manchester	210	25
7. Staffordshire	182	19
8. Cheshire	170	26
9. Suffolk	168	21
10. Nottinghamshire	166	22

Roger Protz commented:

'Areas such as Yorkshire are recording startling brewery growth, with over 6 times more brewers in the region than when the first Good Beer Guide was compiled in the 1970's. Not only are there an exploding number of breweries operating in Britain, but also the quality of real ale has never been better. Speciality brewers are using the finest raw materials - malt and hops - to make their ales. Britain is a great place to be drinking good beer.'



A Viking Landing in Liverpool

It was 5am on Sunday 18th September when a Viking landing took place in Liverpool. This landing took place under the Merseyrail arches on Love Lane in the new **Liverpool Craft Brewery**.

Whilst most people were still abed, brewers Paul Seiffert and Terry Langton watched the completion of their first commercial **Liverpool Craft brew**, the 4.2 % bitter **Viking**.

It was soon to be followed by **HopBeast** and the bottle conditioned **Rascal**, a beer aimed at younger drinkers.

The brews were the culmination of months of preparation. The first version of Viking was brewed on a one gallon test plant and made its debut at the Waterloo Beer Festival in April. Since then the brewery has been equipped and the beers have been further developed and tested. See feature on LCB in MerseyAle Summer 2011.

Viking and HopBeast are now on sale at many pubs across Merseyside.

Burscough Brewery Boom
Burscough Brewery (MerseyAle February edition) has been developing at a rate of knots. The

original range of two beers has grown to eight and sales have reached a level at which a decision to move from the 2 barrel plant behind the **Hop Vine** to a new 20 barrel brewery in a new location.

Equally big news is that Burscough Brewery has recruited **Mike Hitchen** as their Head Brewer. MerseyAle readers will recall Mike from his days at **Beechams** in St Helens College where he ran the brewing course. When the college closed the course Mike moved to **Three Rivers brewery** in Stockport where he continued to brew the national award winning Crystal Wheat he had developed at Beechams.

Such is Mike's knowledge of brewing that he is already known as "the professor" by staff and customers alike at Burscough.

Theakston Mild Goes Missing
Theakston are to cease brewing Theakston Mild other than as a seasonal beer in May for Mild Month.



concentrate as a PubCo on developing the Young's estate of pubs in London and the South.

Wells and Young's was set up in 2006 when Young's closed their famous Ram Brewery in Wandsworth and transferred the brewing of Young's beers to

the Charles Wells brewery at Bedford.

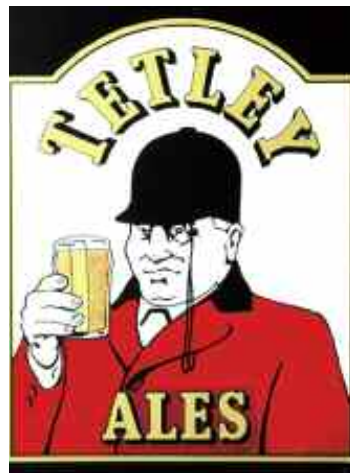
A two year supply agreement has been signed for Young's pubs to continue selling Young's branded beers brewed at Bedford.

Don't Mess with Yorkshire !!!

"Re your article in MerseyAle Autumn 2011 edition on Tetley Leeds Brewery closing and Tetley beers now being brewed out of Yorkshire.

My son-in-law who lives in Leeds tells me that his local plus a number of others now refuse to sell

Tetleys and have switched to the Leeds Brewery products.



You can't mess with Yorkshire folk!"

Cheers,
Neil Carver

For Thwaites Read Sainsbury's

Thwaites are to bring over 200 years of brewing in Blackburn to an end with the sale of their Star brewery site to Sainsbury's for development as a supermarket. The Star brewery is a prominent landmark in the town. Thwaites are to seek a site elsewhere for a state of the art brew plant.

Young's 180 and Out

Young's is to quit brewing after 180 years. They have sold their 40% stake in Wells and Young's Bedford brewery for £15 million to

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We are four local lads who have worked in the licensed trade for many years. Head Brewer Gary Rice has spent over ten years as a licensee in Liverpool managing a number of pubs and bars including the Baltic Fleet. It was here under Master Brewer Stan Shaw that he honed his brewing skills.

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.



Marston's Sponsor Mathew Street Festival Superlambanana Stage



Marston's Brewery sponsored the Superlambanana stage on Tithebarn Street for the two days of the Mathew Street Music Festival over the August Bank Holiday. The brewery has signed a two year sponsorship deal with the Festival and will sponsor the Superlambanana stage again in 2012. The sponsorship was linked to a major promotion of Marston's English Pale Ale (EPA). The stage was decorated with EPA branding and staff handed out promotional items and leaflets.

Over the two day music extravaganza Marstons were giving away free samples of EPA beer from a mobile



bicycle bar complete with a handpump with Marstons EPA branding. Situated opposite the James Monroe pub which also sells Marstons EPA, thirsty music lovers were offered nips of beer from nine gallon barrels. Over the two days six barrels of EPA were consumed. Along with the free samples of EPA, people were invited to enter an Email competition with one lucky punter winning a prize of a years supply of EPA.

EPA uses the Marston's fast cask system which has beads that attract the yeast and allows the beer to drop bright in seconds – see feature in Sept 2010 edition of MerseyAle.



EPA's sponsorship of the Mathew Street Festival was hailed a success after more than 360,000 people turned up for the two-day musical extravaganza over the weekend.

EPA brand manager, Rachel Whillock said: "We were delighted that thousands and thousands of people came along for the free musical event. It gave us the perfect opportunity to get EPA out there in front of new people – and it went down very well indeed. We are already looking forward to next year!"

For more details, go to:
www.marstonsepa.co.uk/mathewst/

ROSCOE HEAD

24 Roscoe Street L1 2SX
Tel: 0151 709 4365

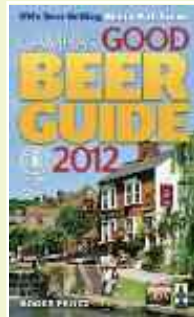


www.roscoehead.co.uk

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 hole.

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

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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 one of only SEVEN pubs to feature in every edition of the Good Beer Guide. That's 38 years of Good Beer Guide entries!

ROSCOE HEAD Making the News

The Roscoe Head and licensee Carol Ross have both been in the news and making the news in recent weeks.

Easy Reading Roscoe Head

Spotted by Jan Sorsby in the September EasyJet inflight magazine.

An EasyJet Destination Liverpool Must Do –

“visit the Roscoe Head Roscoe Street – one of only seven pubs in Britain to have been in every edition of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide.”

It is not recorded whether Jan turned the plane back and followed the advice.

Roscoe Head Goes to Parliament

Carol Ross licensee of the Roscoe Head has given written evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee investigation into PubCos (see pages 15-17). Carol is a tenant of Punch Taverns and has raised several issues about the unfairness of the Beer Tie and level of rents charged by Punch and other PubCos. She was a guest at the All Party Parliamentary Beer Group reception at the Labour Party Conference (see page 41) and took the opportunity to lobby a number of politicians and key people in the industry on the issue of PubCos.

The Daily Telegraph Telegraphing the Roscoe Head

The Roscoe Head was the featured pub in the Daily Telegraph Pint to Pint column on Saturday 8th October 2011. Columnist and drinks expert Adrian Tierney – Jones wrote;

“The Roscoe Head is a Liverpool pub institution - the only one on

Merseyside that's featured in every edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide since the book's debut in 1974. Given the attritional rate of pub closures and takeovers over the years, this is no mean feat.

I could stay here all day

There's an indefinable sense of comfort about this space: banquettes line the wall, above which old brass bells still hang. Landlady Carol Ross, who took over the pub from her parents, tells me that the bells worked until recently. Framed pictures and



posters of breweries decorate the walls and add to the intimacy and seductive allure of the room.

I tune in and out of the conversation but also find myself melting into the traditional and comforting surroundings. I could stay here all day.

There are six real ales on display at the bar. As well as offering comfort

and joy, the Roscoe is also celebrated for its support of microbreweries, both local and farther afield.



Past and Present come together to form a glorious whole

Even though it feels like it has been around forever, this gem actually started life as a private house in the 1870s. And if you stand still and catch a quiet moment, it's easy to sense the ghost of the house that once was (the family around the piano on a musical night, perhaps). Some pubs have ghosts in the shape of a former local or licensee, but at the Roscoe Head, past and present come together to form a glorious whole.”



Carol and her mother Margaret



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When leaving Waterloo Station turn right and cross the road to get to a real ale pub with a quality of entertainment that matches our ales!



CAMRA National Members Weekend 2012 Torquay Devon Friday 30th March to Sunday 1st April

The CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM 2012 will be held at The Riviera Centre in Torquay on 30th March-1st April 2012.

It will provide CAMRA members with the opportunity to engage in CAMRA's national campaigns and discuss future policy and direction. It also gives members the chance to catch up with each other over a pint, visit recommended pubs and go on organised trips.

Torquay boasts a large number of good quality pubs, both in the centre and the surrounding areas. There are 10 breweries within the Torquay area, and many of them will be supplying their real ales for sale in the Members Bar. For real cider/perry drinkers, the award winning Ye Olde Cider Bar in Newton Abbot is close by.

Torquay boasts 22 miles of coastline, consisting of coves, cliffs and beaches so there are plenty of local attractions for members to visit.

If members fancy escaping Torquay, the Dartmoor National Park is nearby which offers fantastic scenery, walks and pubs. The Weekend is open to all CAMRA members to:

- Review what has been happening at branch, regional and national level over the past year
- Have your say, review campaigning themes and form policy
- Hear guest speakers on issues related to beer, brewing and key campaigns
- Meet the formal requirements of an AGM, including presentation of accounts
- Meet up with CAMRA members from around the country, National Executive and HQ staff members
- Discuss ideas to forward to campaign through workshops, policy discussion groups and seminars
- Enjoy a few drinks in the members bar with a good selection of local real ales
- Visit pubs in Torquay and the surrounding areas
- Visit local breweries and cider producers on organised trips



Marston's Identify Two Types of Real Ale Drinker

Real ale drinkers are split into two distinct groups set apart by age and experience, according to new consumer research from Marston's Beer Company.

The study identified that there are primarily two key consumers for the sector: the younger and infrequent drinker, part of the category named as the 'triallists', and the frequent, older, more experienced drinker, who is likely to have grown into the category over time — part of the group called the 'loyalists'.

Triallist

According to Marston's, the 'triallist' is often a 25 to 34-year-old man who is "mainly an off-trade lager drinker," with "low or no cask ale category confidence". He occasionally drinks cask ale when either at a cask-ale festival, on a night out with an ale-drinking group of friends, or when recognising brands.

Loyalist

In contrast, the 'loyalist' is aged 35 to 50-plus and, despite also being predominantly male, is a regular weekly pub visitor and session drinker who has a confident knowledge of cask ale. The 'loyalist' takes "delight in finding something new and trying the unexpected, but will regularly settle for old favourites".

The 'loyalist' cask-ale drinker has "high category confidence", according to the research. The study also revealed that "65% drink cask ale due to its flavour and taste".



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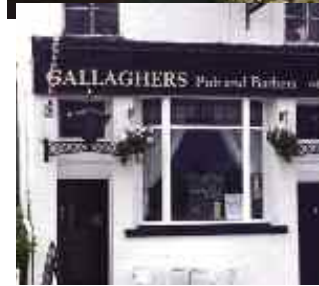
The Edinburgh Festival
fringe
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for the facts drinkaware.co.uk

Gallaghers - A Cut Above the Rest



Sue and Frank with staff, Ian Garner (back left)



Merseyside Regional Pub of the Year

Gallaghers Pub and Barbers, Chester Street, Birkenhead, has plenty to celebrate. CAMRA Wirral's Pub of the Year, 2011, then gained further acclaim, being judged Merseyside Pub of the Year, against some stiff competition.

The award was presented by Ian Garner, CAMRA Regional Director. Ian praised the way in which Frank and Sue had brought the pub back from a period of closure to make it a vibrant community local, attracting a wide range of people. He also praised the careful improvement and redecoration work which enhanced the interior created by Steve Holt the then Managing Director of Cains brewery in the pub's earlier incarnation. The evening was capped by the fireworks display on the river for the departure of the Queen Mary 2 - or perhaps it was celebrating Gallaghers!

Owners Frank and Sue Gallagher opened the pub in September 2010, and have succeeded so well that Gallaghers is in the 2012 Good Beer Guide - swift progress for a new pub.

Unusually, the pub is also a barbers. Frank and Sue merged their existing Birkenhead businesses into the new venture, and were therefore able to draw upon their existing customers to form the basis for their trade. The prospect of a pint as well as a haircut has proved appealing. Close to Hamilton Square, there is no shortage of lunchtime customers in need of food and drink. It is well-served by both train and Woodside Ferry, as well as being handy for main bus routes.

The pub, built in 1826, had been the Chester Arms, and was then bought and refurbished by Steve Holt of Cains Brewery becoming the Dispensary Birkenhead, but had been closed for nearly three years when the Gallaghers bought the freehold from Cains. The decor includes photographs of Liverpool and naval shipping including the Manxman, Blue Funnel, Harrison and Clan Line vessels. There is a selection of military memorabilia including regimental caps and miniature drums (Frank was in the Irish Guards), as well as a range of model sailing ships.

Keen supporters of microbreweries, Frank and Sue serve **Brimstage** and **Peerless**, both from the Wirral, as constants. Other beers frequently available come from **Liverpool**



Organic and Phoenix from Stockport. They also stock locally produced farm ciders - and sometimes perry. CAMRA leaflets are prominently displayed.

It's the extras, as well as the beer and cider which help make Gallaghers special: the occasional jazz nights, the bookshelf (bring more, borrow or buy - money goes to 'Help For Heroes'), the newspapers, ferry timetables and beer garden.

Must go; train to catch at Hamilton Square.....

Helen McCall



ManxAle

The Island Story is of real ale gains throughout the Island. Two new real ale outlets, a pub closure with others under threat, a new beer from Okells which will be available in Wetherspoon Across, plus active campaigning by the IOM CAMRA Branch with MHK candidates and the Manx Food and Drink Festival.

Peel

The Central Reopens

After a prolonged closure The Central, a former characterful hotel and bar nestled amongst the housing in Peel, has reopened, with a dramatic increase in the real ales stocked by Jayne Smith the new licensee.

The prospects for this unique outlet had looked bleak, and there were



fears that the pub was lost forever, with reports on closure that much of the furniture had been rapidly sold. However Mersey Ale is



delighted to report the reopening of this architectural gem, with its cosy three roomed split level drinking areas, two of which feature many of the original tables and chairs, after some were returned to the pub on reopening. A further room away from the bar features a pool table.

The walls are adorned with pictures and photographs of the nearby Peel Castle, fearsome tides lashing the



Peel seafront and other pictures of a nautical theme. The decorative glass in the entrance door depicting Peel Castle is particularly fine and worth a visit.

The beer at the time of visit was **Copper Dragons Golden Pippin (3.9%)**, **Thwaites Nutty Black (3.3%)**, and **Holdens XB (4.1%)** in top condition. It is intended that the Nutty Black be a permanent feature, which will be a welcome boost for the drinkers of mild.

The Central is open from noon until 11pm weekdays, midnight Friday & Saturday night, but closed on Sundays. MerseyAle wishes Jayne all the best in the venture, and it is



superb news to see the pub saved and reopened, especially as it is the last of its kind architecturally on the Island.

Pub Losses in Port St Mary and Douglas

The Bay View in Port St Mary now appears to be closed.

On Douglas South Quay, the **Trafalgar**, closed for some time,

looks lost forever, as structural work turning it into a private house is underway. Dating back to at least 1852 as a pub, the outlet featured fleetingly in the 'No Limit' TT film classic featuring George Formby. Directly opposite on the North



Quay, **The Douglas Hotel**, circa 1758, looks a forlorn sight having closed some time ago now and still awaiting the Okells scheme to renovate it as a brew pub.

With the aforementioned Bay View dating from the 1850's we are sadly



a generation witnessing the demise of hundreds of years of history and tradition in some of the pub stock, although The Bay View is not lost yet.

More Island Real Ale Gains

The Glen Helen Inn has added a further guest ale in addition to **Okells Bitter** and a **Bushys** beer plus a cider (**Weston's** at the time of visiting). Manager Scott Filbey has been gradually increasing the number of hand pumps as demand has increased and confidence has been gained in maintaining the real ale. **The Glen Helen Inn**, known throughout the world in TT motorbike racing circles, sits



alongside the course, set back in a rural location nestling amongst the trees.

There is a seventeen bedroom hotel on site, and the Inn can cater for weddings and functions for up to one hundred and fifty people. There



is a welcome and flexible approach to food and dining times. The Inn is open seven days a week, serving food from 12 noon until 9pm



throughout the year. Any items from a small snack to a full dinner can be ordered from the menu, and teas and coffees are served from 10am. Breakfasts are also usually available. There are relaxed and stylish bar areas, but most importantly non diners are very welcome at any time.

The Glen Helen Inn is served by bus route 6C (Sundays excepted).

Castletown Glue Pot

New Licensee to Boost Real Ale Lawrence Gill is the new landlord of the renowned Glue Pot in Castletown arriving on September 2nd. Vastly experienced having run a very successful real ale pub in Gateshead for over 20 years, works were underway immediately to install new beer lines and hand

pumps. In addition separate pythons have been introduced round the fonts to maintaining the ales in top condition and temperature.

It is clear that Heron & Brearley along with Lawrence are going to develop The Glue Pot substantially during the coming months, paying attention to the upstairs areas as well as the outside seating area. The local CAMRA group has long felt that there is huge potential for this iconic pub, with its huge character and stunning location, sited between the ancient castle and the harbour. With relatively little expenditure because of the pubs relatively small size, this potential now looks set to be realised.

For those not aware, the Glue Pot is the only Manx pub to feature on the Islands own currency, clearly visible on the back of the Manx £5 note. Watch this space!

Douglas – HQ Bar and Jaks Bar More Hand Pumps

The HQ Bar, just off the promenade on Empress Terrace has now introduced a second hand pump, Jaks Bar on Loch Promenade now has an additional permanent **HobGoblin** font as well as the recently introduced **Okells bitter**.



The Bridge on North Quay Douglas now regularly stocks an additional guest ale to supplement the Okells bitter.

The Prospect in Douglas, owned by Heron & Brearley (as is The Glue Pot) is to significantly increase its range of real ale, and has recently installed a total of eight hand pumps!!! It is intended to stock up to seven ales, including two Okells bitter hand pumps.

New Strategy at Okells ?

With positive movement at The Gluepot and the Prospect there may

hopefully be a much welcomed change in strategy at H&B. With the success of the nearby **Woodbourne Hotel**, also owned by H&B there looks to be considerable investment in real ale in the right pubs.

Another Island Real Ale Gain – Colours in Douglas And The Price is Right !

Colours bar, a modern hotel bar, in the centre of Douglas promenade, within the former Hilton complex now owned by **The Sefton Group**, has embraced real ale. Four real ale hand pumps have recently appeared. **Okells bitter**, and **Marstons Pedigree** are going to feature on most occasions, with two other rotating guests.

The Sefton Group ran the famous and lamented **Tramshunters Arms** within the Sefton Hotel on the Promenade.

But what is hugely noteworthy, is the price. Coming in at **£1.95 per pint**, this is by some margin the cheapest real ale on Island. The venture has only been underway for two weeks at time of going to press, but unlike the U.K. there are no pub chains of the **Wetherspoons** variety on The Isle of Man offering heavily discounted ales. It should be noted that Wetherpoon continue to expand aggressively, and have this year gone offshore in Orkney.

IOM CAMRA Campaigning Manx General Election.

The Manx House of Keys Parliament recently held its General Elections for MHKs, the closest UK equivalent being Members of Parliament. The local CAMRA group lobbied all candidates, forwarding copies of CAMRA's Beer Drinkers & Pub Goers Charter. There was a positive response from a good number of candidates, and meetings were held to discuss CAMRA's objectives.

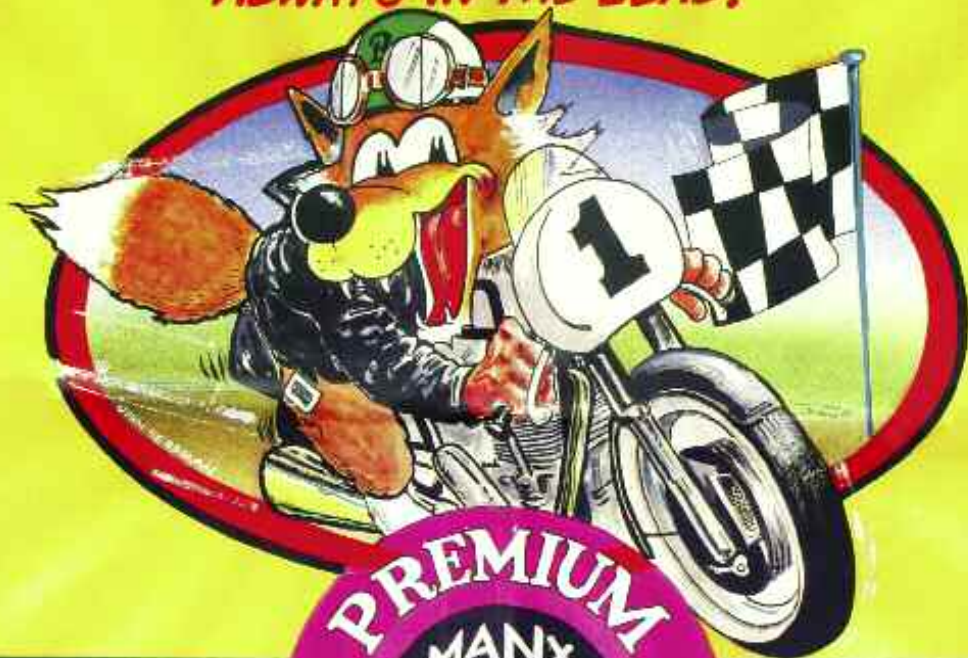
IOM CAMRA Ensures Festival Goers Enjoy Manx Real Ale at the Manx Food and Drink Festival.

An annual festival promoting the Islands produce has been held for some years in late September. This year funding was reduced. However, the local CAMRA group

Bushy's

BRAND

"ALWAYS IN THE LEAD!"



PURE BY LAW

PREMIUM MANX ALES

DOUGLAS ISLE OF MAN

1ST

AT THE

11

"ASK FOR THEM BY NAME"

decided to volunteer their services, and a range of 13 ales from all of the Island breweries was available for sampling during the course of the event. This, coupled with enthusiastic and vital support and technical assistance from **Martin Brunnschweiler** in particular (Bushy's brewery owner), some sponsorship, as well as help from **Okells and Bosuns** brewery, ensured that Manx real ales were represented at the event along with other Isle of Man produce. Although not a CAMRA event, the local Chairman Charles Miller felt it was an important marketing opportunity for CAMRA that should not be missed.

Twenty Years in the Good Beer Guide Awards

Success Awards for Sulby Glen Hotel and the Whitehouse Peel

Awards were presented in early October to **The Sulby Glen Hotel,**

consecutive appearances in Guide with the same landlady /landlord respectively. This is a remarkable achievement for both **Rosie Christian** (Sulby) and **Neil Keig** (Whitehouse).



The Sulby Glen Hotel held their first Cider Festival in October and was also the very first on the Island. The Sulby Glen had over 41 different ciders from all over the UK, Ireland and Sweden mostly in bottles as this was the first event.



There was also some draught cider and it is planned to have more at next year's event. The Festival received very good support from CAMRA Isle of Man Branch.

The Guide is in its 39th year, and less than a dozen pubs throughout the British Isles have featured in all editions, **The Roscoe Head** on Roscoe Street in Liverpool being one of the select **Magnificent Seven** that have featured in every edition of the Good Beer Guide. See page 31 "**Roscoe Head Making the News**"



and **The Whitehouse** in Peel. With the publication of **The Good Beer Guide 2012** in September, these two outlets have clocked up twenty

several new entrants, which will be featured in future MerseyAles, namely, **The Horse & Plough** (Bradden), **The Manx**

Arms (Onchan), **The New Inn** (Laxey), **The Colby Glen Inn** (Colby), and **The Marine** (Peel).

Rovers Beer Festival Delay

At short notice, The Rovers Return Beer Festival has had to be postponed. Due to be held mid November, a technical leasing negotiation matter has interrupted proceedings. However only the Festival is affected and all is well at The Rovers generally. Significant works and refurbishment of both the loo areas (hurray !!) and outside area is underway. Landlord Guy is hoping to reschedule the Festival at a later date.

New Okells Beer Saison

Okells have produced a new seasonal beer, **Saison**, at 4.5% ABV. This is a golden beer and a significant deal has been struck with Wetherspoons in the U.K. to sell the brew widely. With a distinctive but delicate citrus flavour, the brew is described officially as a golden coloured beer, made from Citra, Galena Pilgrim and Nelson Sauvin hops.



It is not impossible that there is an additional agreement with Wetherspoons. Ruddles County, a beer seldom seen on Island, but one widely available in the Wetherspoons estate, has been present in a number of H&B houses quite recently. This may just be coincidence however.

Finally, as winter approaches on the Island spare a thought for **The Haven** in Port Erin, whose pub sign has blown away already in the recent high winds, and it's only early October! A replacement is on order and will feature in MerseyAle in due course.

Dave Halliwell

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39 Brasenose Road, Liverpool L20 8HL. 0151 933 9660

Labour IN LIVERPOOL ALL PARTY BEER GROUP RECEPTION

For at least some of the delegates, one of the highlights of the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool may well have been the reception, facilitated by CAMRA and held by the All Party Beer Group, which was held in the Baltic Fleet, Wapping, on Tuesday 27th September.

The group lobbies for beer and pubs as vital elements of British life, and CAMRA nationally acts as secretariat for the group. Its current chair is the Conservative MP for Burton on Trent, Andrew Griffiths. The reception followed the successful event held at the Baltic Fleet for delegates at last year's Liberal Democrat Party Conference.

Many of the conference delegates had evidently found their way to the Baltic over the previous days.



Indeed, the Guardian newspaper in its 'In praise of... Georgian Liverpool' column on that day, had suggested: '...stroll out to Wapping, where the Baltic Fleet pub is a reminder of nautical links'.

Several members of the Committee of the Liverpool and District Branch of CAMRA were present, as well as

Chief Executive Mike Benner and Public Affairs Managers Jonathan Mail and Emily Ryans from CAMRA headquarters. Carol Ross, licensee of the Roscoe Head, joined conference delegates, an assortment of journalists and other invitees.

All were brought together by a shared interest in beer. Where else could one meet, in quick succession, a journalist from the 'Mail on Sunday', a Tory ex-MP, a Labour ex-MP and Robert Humphreys Honorary Secretary of the All Party Beer Committee?

MerseyAle and Liverpool Pubs Map

There was plenty of animated conversation during the evening, but it was noticeable how many of the guests were eagerly reading MerseyAle over their scouse and pints, and studying the new Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Map with a view to further exploration.

Campaigning on National Issues

Glasses were replenished with a range of Wapping beers by Simon Holt and his helpful bar staff. For us, it was an evening of campaigning, both as a strong local branch spreading the word about our own success in bringing new people to real ale, and also reminding guests of national issues, such as the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee call for a statutory PubCo code of practice (see page 15), and the publication of the Cask Report (see page 25).

The evening concluded with us escorting our national CAMRA visitors to the Dispensary, our Liverpool Pub of the Year, and then to the wonderful Roscoe Head, one of only seven pubs nationally to have been in every edition of the Good Beer Guide, and whose



Robert Humphreys Carol Ross

licensee, Carol Ross (above), had given written evidence to the Select Committee regarding the unsatisfactory relationship between the pubcos and their tenants. We hope that those who attended the reception would agree with the 1797 guide to Liverpool, also quoted in the 'Guardian' column:

The city 'induces a general harmony and sociability, unclouded by those ceremonies and distinctions that are met with in more polished life; hence the freedom and animation which the town has always been observed to possess.'

I'll raise a glass to harmony and sociability.

Helen McCall
Liverpool CAMRA Public Policy Officer



Emily Ryans Jonathan Mail



Mike Benner, Bob Jones and Tony Cunningham Lab MP Workington



Geoff Edwards Chairman Liverpool CAMRA centre

Lancashire Reign After Seventy Seven Years of Hurt MerseyAle There to Celebrate !!



Lancashire-based brewer Thwaites has created a new beer to celebrate Lancashire County Cricket Club's first County Championship triumph in over seven decades.

Thwaites, whose Wainwright Beer is the official sponsor of Lancashire CCC, has brewed 'Lancashire Reign' especially to honour the Red Roses' achievement.

The club secured their first County Championship win since 1934 by defeating Somerset by eight wickets and club sponsor Thwaites joined in the celebrations by unveiling the limited edition beer.

Lee Williams, marketing manager of Thwaites said: "After waiting over six decades to be crowned County Championship winners once again, we wanted to share in Lancashire County Cricket Clubs success by creating Lancashire Reign. The other kind of Lancashire Reign has scuppered their chances in previous years so it was an easy beer to name." Warren Hegg, commercial manager at Lancashire CCC said: "Everyone at the club is thrilled to win the

County Championship especially after such a nail-biting end to the season. (this included a win in the last five minutes in the last match at Aigburth). All the players and coaching staff richly deserve to revel in their success and we will certainly enjoy a few pints of Lancashire Reign to celebrate."

Lancashire Reign, a 5% hoppy ale, will be available in Thwaites supplied pubs and bars. And MerseyAle was there to join in the celebrations at



Taunton of the End to Seventy Seven Years of Hurt at IOM CAMRA branch contact Angela Aspin led the celebrations with her copy of MerseyAle.

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Wetherspoon are Seven Up in New 2012 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

Liverpool and District's CAMRA Good Beer Guide launch took place on 15th September in the Fall Well Queens Square, marking the fact that Wetherspoons have a record total of seven Liverpool area pubs in the 2012 edition.

The managers of six of those pubs were present to receive their Good Beer Guide accreditations. Photos of the launch will appear in the Wetherspoon magazine.

On the night, CAMRA members and Fall Well regulars were treated to a 'Meet the Brewers' with not one, not two, but THREE breweries represented.

Peerless, Liverpool One and Moorhouses, were all present offering information on their beers, the brewing process and, of course, free samples. Peerless brought along a beer that was so new it had yet to be named, although by the end of the



Brewers L to R Moorhouse's, Peerless Liverpool One



Wetherspoons managers

Sonia James-Henry

evening I believe they had settled upon 'Crystal Maze'.

There was a lovely stout from Liverpool One, aptly named 'Liverpool Dark', one to look out for as the nights grow colder and, of course, darker! Moorhouses provided some of their excellent bottled beers, and a display of some of the ingredients that goes into making them.

Sonia James-Henry
Liverpool CAMRA Good Beer Guide Co-ordinator
Email address: surveys@merseycamra.org.uk

The Importance of Beer Scoring

You can influence which pubs are selected for inclusion in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide by sending in beer scores for the beers you drink in pubs. Scores play an important part in identifying the pubs nationwide that are serving top quality real ale and are worthy of inclusion in the GBG.

So next time you are drinking in a pub take a few seconds to jot down your score for that beer and send them in to the Branch by email or bring your written scores to a Liverpool Branch Get Together meeting listed in MerseyAle and on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk The website has a section on Beer Scoring to guide you and you can download beer score forms or collect a copy at a Get Together.

Remember beer scores are used to compile the Good Beer Guide so, if you want your voice to be heard – get beer scoring!!

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Bentox - "ahhh the excerable bentox...!!!"

In the Autumn 2011 edition we asked if anyone remembered Bents Bentox and knew what was in it. Readers Thomas Roe, Alan Gall, Stan (Jars) Freeman and Steve Goulding contacted us with this information;

"ahhh the excerable Bentox.... !!
I remember reading the label once. It described the ingredients thus; **"Bentox a fine blend of British cream sherry, and beef and malt extract."**

Basically cheap sherry and oxo! Hence the ox at the end, disgusting stuff.

It was by no means alone in those far off days of absolutely vile concoction - anyone remember "Clan Dew"? That was a "fine blend" of cheap sherry and cheap whisky! It tasted as bad as it sounds.

What a joy it was to have discovered Scatchards Wine shop in town when I was about 16, and began to appreciate what real wine and malt whisky tasted like. (They usually had a cask of malt on sale at keen prices and you took your own bottle to be filled up - Editor)

Here's a few other names to conjure with;
Esterlina, Juanita (pronounced joanita in the Dingle), **Armadillo, Barchester Cream, Spring Grove;**

QC which stood for "quality counts" - if only !!
There are many more but I have to stop now as I'm beginning to feel a little sick.
Thomas Roe

BentoxOnly Mildly Unpleasant !!

I think that describing Bentox as tasting like paraffin is going too far. It was only mildly unpleasant, a problem that went away after consuming half a bottle. The wine may also have had some nutritional properties since it was made using beef extract. As underaged drinkers on a budget, it became a favourite until we discovered the pubs that would serve schoolboys, no questions asked.

My first pint was probably in the **Pen & Wig** on Harrington Street. Bitter cost about 1 shilling and ten pence then (old money).

My fond memories of Bentox did not carry over to Bent's beers, which were by far inferior to the brews offered by Higsons, Threlfalls & Walkers.

Alan Gall

Fermented Beef Extract

In the early 60's I lived in a bedsit in Percy Street Liverpool 8. I used to visit a pub in a small street nearby which ran through to Gambia Terrace. I noticed a fave tittle of the regulars was bottles of Bentox, so I gave it a try. Whilst supping I read on the bottle label "made from fermented ox blood" and didn't finish the drink!
BentOX? Nuff said !! Still live to tell the tale but can't remember name of street or pub.
Cheers
Stan (Jars) Freeman

Foul but Effective

In response to your article on Bentox, I am 62 years old and remember it very well.

Between the ages of 17 and 19, I used to meet with my friends on a

Friday night for a pub crawl in town (Liverpool). We used to meet in a Bents house in Dale Street called "The Palatine" now called **"The Saddle"**. Binge drinking is not a modern phenomenon and we did not consider it a good night if we remembered much of it the following day. We used to start the night with a couple of large Bentox which was popular at the time with young men and alcoholics as it was cheap and powerfully intoxicating.



The first time I tried it I asked the bar man what it was, to be told that Bentox was a fortified wine containing beef extract. It was dark red in colour and tasted disgusting with a strong odour just like methylated spirit. It was very difficult to drink the first one but subsequent drinks were easier. Bentox was a foul concoction but achieved its purpose very well.

Steve Goulding



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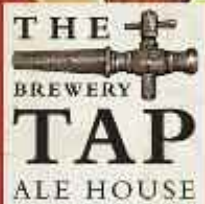


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A Bouche of Pommès

Tasting French Cidres



Most CAMRA members will have tried a traditional British farm cider at sometime in their lives and indeed popularity in real cider and perry seems to be increasing year on year, but are we Brits alone? Across the channel in France cider has always been very popular and until the early 20th century cider was second only to wine as the country's most consumed drink. But what do we British know about French cider? With this question in mind MerseyAle went along to a recent French cider tasting at the Belvedere Arms Sugnal Street hosted by licensee John O'Dowd.

Before we get down to the business of tasting is probably best if we Anglos do a little homework if we are to make the most of the evening.

Vive La Difference !

French cider is quite different to its English and Welsh cousins. It is usually made in Normandy and Brittany and varies in strength considerably. "Cidre Doux" is sweet and usually up to 3% alc, "Demi-Sec" is 3%-5% and "Cidre Brut" is a strong cider of 5% alc or more; most French ciders are sparkling. There is a higher quality cider, sold in champagne style bottles called "Cidre Bouché" and that usually has a cork and wire enclosure.

French cidemakers will often design their ciders as an accompaniment to food and will market their products as if they were wine, stating that this cider will go well with that food etc.

The Cidre Tasting

And now for the cider tasting, which was taken in a champagne flute. The first two products are from Christian Drouin of Coudray-Rabut in Normandy.

Cidre Bouché Brut de Normandie, 4.5% alc.

As the name suggests this is presented in a champagne type bottle. It is not pasteurised, it is a living product and is clear and sparkling. The cider sparkles on the tongue and has apple pie-like notes that linger in the mouth long after the cider has been swallowed. We learn later that Drouin recommends this cider with white meat or fish.

Christian Drouin Poiré, 4.0% alc.

This perry arrives sparkling and has a pale yellow-green hue. It is very sharp on the tongue and has notes of pear drops and citrus. There is a hint of oak, possibly from barrel fermentation process. Strangely it is simultaneously dry and sweet. Highly refreshing, rather elegant flavour and finish. Drouin pairs this with shellfish, sorbets and strawberries.

The next three products are made by Eric Bordolet at Charchigné in Normandy.

Sydre Brut, 7.0% alc.

This has the translucent glow you may expect from a cider and is delicate on the tongue. The cider has an aroma of apples. The taste is of smooth apples, the texture creamy and viscous, with a pleasantly bitter flavour. There is a long aftertaste. We learn that the maker has paired this with pork and poultry, which seems to fit with my English palette.

Sydre Argelette, 4.0% alc.

This is a very delicate cider, it presents no nose and is much more still than the others. It is sweet and has a delicate apple taste. The name apparently comes from the stoney land where the apples grow with great difficulty. The maker thinks this is suitable for Normandy cheese, nuts, spicy foods and chocolate.

Poiré Granit "Poiré Grand cru", 3.5% alc.

There seems so much to say about this poiré perry. It is presented in a heavy champagne style bottle and much is made of its origins. The "Granit" refers to the rock on which the pear trees grow, the roots twist and mould in to the ravines in the granite and minerals are absorbed into the root systems. The trees themselves are over 300 years old and produce very little fruit. This means that the fruit that is grown will have intensely strong flavours.

What is it like? The nose is definitely of pears, the body is champagne like and dry. The taste is pear-resin like, almost rubbery with a hint of citrus and flowers. The finish is long and complex.

The Verdict

The French cider and perry tasting was much enjoyed by the six tasters who supplemented the proceedings with French cheeses and crackers. A vote was taken; five voters preferred the first cider "Cidre Bouché Brut de Normandie", one voter preferred "Christian Drouin Poiré".

During the tasting the tasters did not know the price of the ciders. Perhaps surprisingly nobody voted for the "Poiré Granit" which sells for £25 per bottle.

As a result of the tasting "Cidre Bouché Brut de Normandie" is now available at the Belvedere Arms at £6.75 per bottle.

MerseyAle would like to thank the Belvedere Arms for its hospitality.

Steve Berks
Liverpool CAMRA Cider Officer



www.wappingbeers.co.uk

BALTIC FLEET

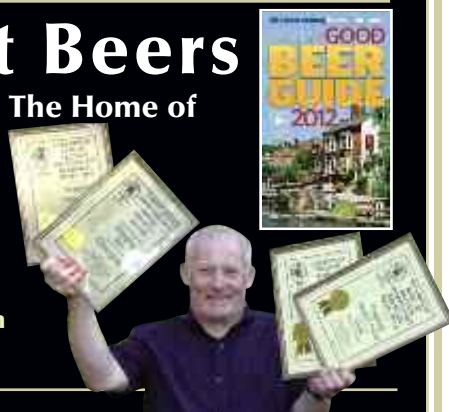
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To complement the beer, the Festival promises an unbeatable food buffet including English and Indian dishes, as well as live music on the Saturday.

The National Winter Ales Festival is also home to the Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition, and on the opening day (January 18th), all eyes will be on

who wins the top prize after Hop Back brewery of Downton, Wiltshire took the overall title in 2011 for their Entire Stout. Graham Donning, NWA Festival organiser, speaking in anticipation of the 2012 Festival, said:

'Considering the positive growth we've seen over the last couple of years in terms of the number of brewers opening up across Britain, let alone those producing winter beers, we're gearing up for another great year and welcome drinkers old and new to come along and enjoy a pint. I can't remember the last time there was so much choice available to drinkers in terms of stouts, porters, old ales and other winter beer styles on the market, so it's an exciting time to be organising this festival.'

For more information, please visit www.alefestival.org.uk

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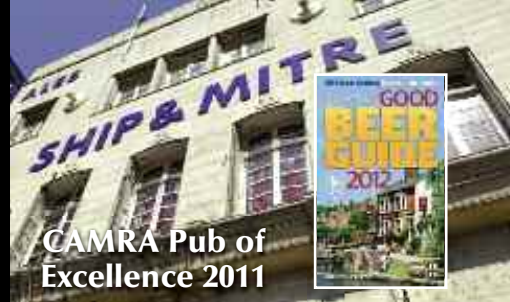
Friday 20th January - 12:00pm - 4:30pm - **£3** (£2 for CAMRA member)

Friday 20th January - 4:30pm - 10:30pm - **£5** (£4 for CAMRA member)

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Ian Causer who acquired donations and support from a number of organisations.

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Brian Cunliffe - The fixer at the Abbey Hotel.

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Hi, my name is Emma Johnson.

On the 17th November 2010 my boyfriend Guardsman Christopher Davies 1st Battalion Irish Guards, made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan. He tragically lost his life protecting this country and ensuring the future safety of the country, and all living within it. He started off as my hero and is now a hero for everyone. Before he went to Afghanistan I mentioned about maybe doing a sky dive for Help for Heroes but he told me I would never be brave enough to do it. He was brave, and he was the 100th soldier to die in 2010.

So in honour of his memory and on 1st June 2011, after a reschedule due to adverse weather, I jumped out of a plane at 14,000 feet above Lancaster. I only thought I would be able to raise around £1,000 but with the sponsorship and dedication from many across the country I am staggered by the current total and it makes me immensely proud to be British, as Chris was.

In excess of £15,000 has been raised to-date through www.bmycharity.com/ourchristopher.

What has been achieved could not have been done without the support of the licencees' of, **The Turks Head and Abbey Hotel, St.Helens and The Eagle and Child, Rainford** and the sponsors who so graciously and without question donated raffle prizes and barrels of beer. As well as **'The Turks Head Trekkers'**, 12 brave and intrepid walkers who completed the Keswick to Barrow 40 mile walk in May 2011 raising £5,208.

We couldn't have done this without all of our sponsors who not only donated raffle prizes, but also gave up their time to support us.

Can I ask that you show your support to 'Help for Heroes' which is an amazing charity providing support and help for our wounded soldiers and their families, by going to www.bmycharity.com/ourchristopher. It may reach £20,000 with your donation.

Thanks,
Emma

HOW OTHERS SEE US

Seven Streets Web Site Reviews MerseyAle



“Want to know what's really going on in the city? Time to seek out the best of our home-grown publications...”

Liverpool website www.sevenstreets.com is an informative source of news, reviews and comment on the scene in Liverpool. The site has been running a series reviewing local Liverpool publications.

Here is their review of MerseyAle.

“For the real story, we’re increasingly turning to publications that don’t confuse press releases with proper stories.”

Time, then, to celebrate one of our favourite local publications, MerseyAle’s excellent periodical aimed at CAMRA members, real ale lovers, and those with more than a passing passion for our great (and all too often, endangered) ale houses.

Part campaigning call to arms, part elegy for pubs on the brink (or lost), the magazine can’t be accused of giving short measures. Every issue is topped full of news, interviews, featured pubs, comment and opinion.

Treat it as a guide book, and you’ll find your next pub crawl takes you to lost gems, micro breweries and pub festivals happening right on your doorstep.

And the fact that this issue contains a dig at Cains, while carrying an ad for them says all we need to know about its editorial policy. We approve.

Yes, the state of the great British boozier is perilous indeed (as the excellent book, Closing Time, sadly chronicles) but with healthy coverage, and intelligent insight, the pub is fighting back.



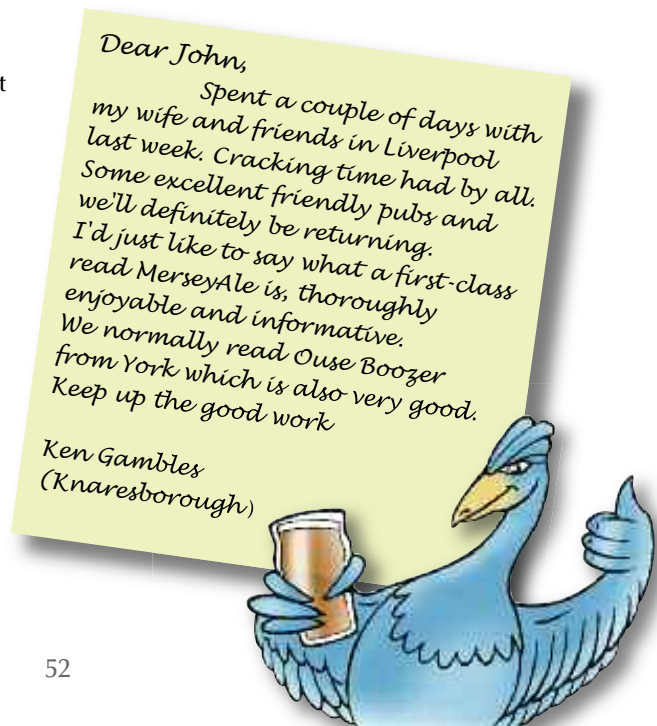
And it’s publications like MerseyAle that are leading the charge.

You can pick a copy up, free, in many of the city’s best ale houses (we got ours in the Lion, Tithebarn Street)

We raise our glasses to editor, John Armstrong, and the team.”

See www.sevenstreets.com

How Our Readers See Us
Great Merseyale – letter



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Opinions expressed in the Mersey Ale are not necessarily those of the Editor Liverpool Branch or CAMRA

Liverpool & Districts CAMRA Diary

Liverpool Branch Get Togethers

An opportunity to meet other members socially and to find out about and discuss Local Campaigning and CAMRA activities.

Wednesday 16th November 8pm

Excelsior Dale Street in back room

Why is new pub design so poor?

What can be done to improve pub design?

Sean Murphy Chair of the CAMRA Pub Design Committee outlines the efforts to improve design and how the annual **CAMRA Pub Design Awards** are judged.

Wednesday 14th December 8pm

Christmas Social and Get Together

Liverpool One Bridewell upstairs Function Room

Campbell Square Argyll Street off Duke Street

Informal Branch Social and Christmas Celebration

Tickets £5 include buffet and 2 free pints. On sale at 16th November Get Together or email contact@mersecamra.org.uk

Wednesday 18th January 2012 8pm

Liverpool CAMRA Branch Annual

General Meeting

Ship and Mitre Higher Room Dale Street

The Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool and Districts Branch will be held in the Higher Room at the Ship and Mitre on Wednesday, January 18th commencing at 8 p.m.

At this meeting a new Committee will be elected. Members wishing to stand for the Committee should inform the Branch Secretary by email contact@mersecamra.org.uk or at a Branch Get Together but nominations will also be accepted at the AGM.

Please note CAMRA membership cards will be required to be shown should any votes be taken.

For further details about Get Togethers, see website nearer time.

Liverpool CAMRA Coach Trips for 2012 See page 17 for details



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