

MerseyAle

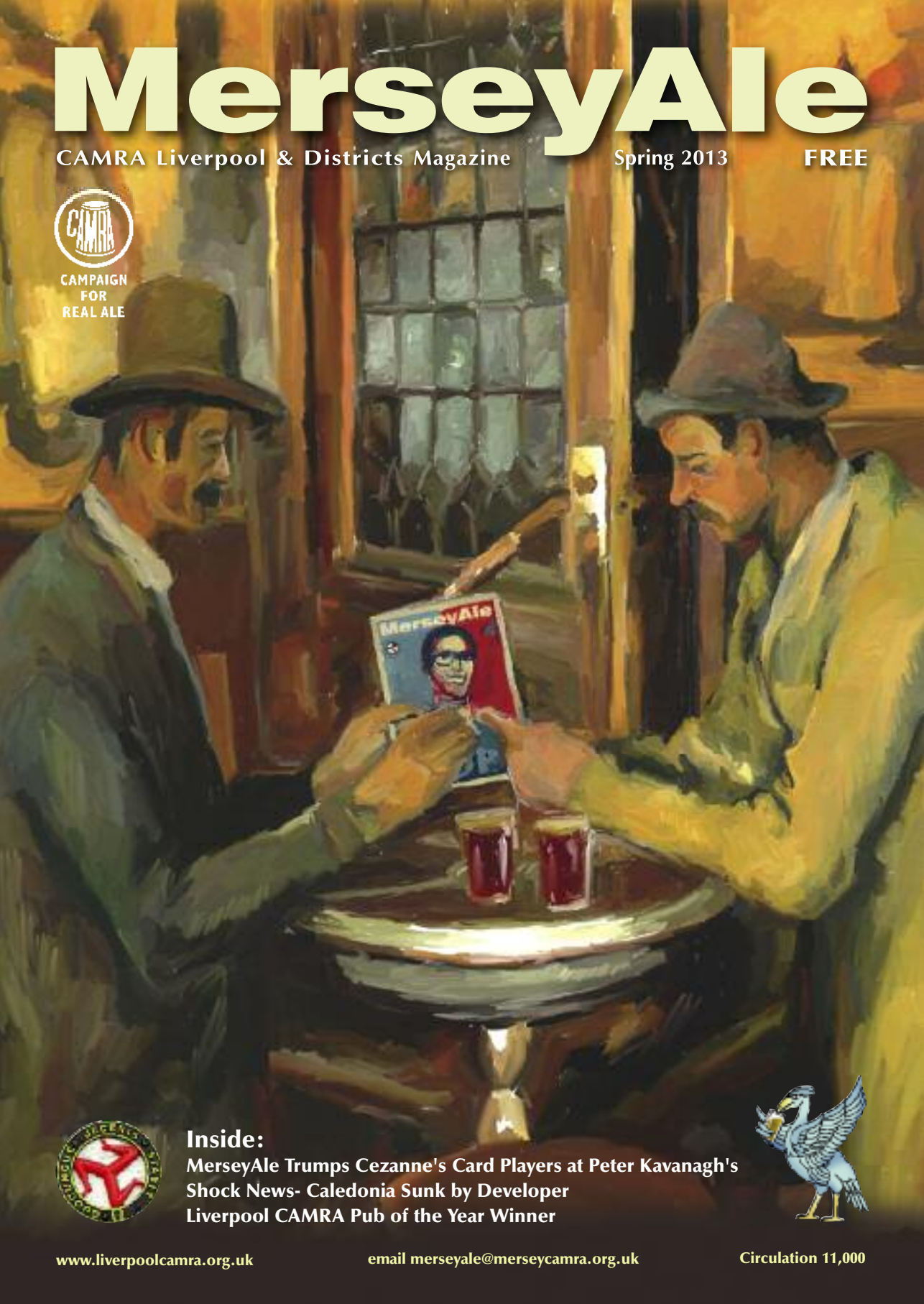
CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Spring 2013

FREE



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



Inside:

MerseyAle Trumps Cezanne's Card Players at Peter Kavanagh's
Shock News- Caledonia Sunk by Developer
Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year Winner



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WEEKLY LOCALE See Board for future Real Ales

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Daily Telegraph

PUB OF EXCELLENCE 2012 CASK MARQUE CAMRA NATIONAL INVENTORY PUB

FOOD

See the board for selection of good value food

QUIZ NIGHT

every Tuesday at 9.30pm

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

MerseyAle

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Isle of Man CAMRA Branch
www.isleofmancamra.org.uk

CAMRA national site
www.camra.org.uk

Cover

"The Discussion" by Dennis Jones
A revision of Paul Cézanne's famous painting "The Card Players" The world's most expensive painting sold in 2011 for more than \$250,000,000



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



Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle

CAMRA is a Campaign of Two Halves, the Campaigning and the Social, and this edition of MerseyAle has stories on both. We have examples of successful campaigning at national and local level. The national victory of the **Stop the Beer Duty Escalator campaign** (page 7), Liverpool CAMRA **Battling for the British Pub** (pages 31 and 33), plus the **national award winning Snowball campaign** (pages 47 to 49). We bring you stories of people enjoying real ale in our great Liverpool pubs and discovering that real ale is fun.

We reveal the **2013 Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year** (pages 4 and 5) and review the Pubs of the Year on Merseyside, those from across the regions, the four National finalists and the overall **National CAMRA Pub of the Year Winner** (pages 21 and 23).

MerseyAle can claim to be CAMRA's only International magazine, with over 1,000 copies of every edition distributed across the Isle of Man, which is fiercely independent and not part of the UK. Read **ManxAle** news and features (pages 39 to 41). MerseyAle is also big in the United States, as shown by the article by San Francisco film maker Jeffrey French (pages 26 and 27). Learn about the connection between **Liverpool Pubs, Serendipity, the Pool of Life and why Bootle leads the world – yes really!**

We feature great Liverpool pubs including the iconic, eccentric, **Peter Kavanagh's** (pages 28 to 29). There is major brewery news from **Cains** with plans for a £50 million **Brewery Village** and another new brewery for Liverpool with an **Alice in Wonderland Mad Hatter** twist (pages 12 and 13).

The **SHOCK NEWS** is the sale and closure of the award winning **Caledonia pub** by **Admiral Taverns** and developer **Marcus Worthington** to make way for a **student accommodation scheme for Liverpool University** (pages 15 and 17). What Can be Done? Join the fight to **Save our Pubs** (page 19).

Meanwhile there remains the **Elephant in the Room** – the national PubCos who control 50% of Britain's pubs and stand accused by Greg Mulholland MP of actions which are "nothing more than a scam.... It's heartbreaking" (pages 9 and 11).

Read the back cover and you will realise **You Can't Afford NOT to Join CAMRA Today!**



John Armstrong
Editor

Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013



Stamps Too Waterloo

Report by Sonia James-Henry

This year's Liverpool and District CAMRA Pub of the Year is situated, not in the city centre, but in the suburbs and can be found in Waterloo. Conveniently located diagonally opposite Waterloo railway station and the bus station, it is a short 20 minute train ride away from Liverpool Central. There are several other real ale pubs within walking distance to make a very attractive pub trail which is an excellent alternative to the usual city centre pub crawl.

Licensee Frank Parrat opened Stamps Too on 22nd October 2004. Frank says;

"My vision was to build on the success of Stamps in Crosby which was started by friends of mine, and to develop a sort of Stamps 'brand' in the local area.

I wanted to provide a high standard of real ale in Waterloo that would attract a good crowd. There is a different atmosphere and ethos to real ale pubs which I like, but I also wanted to give its drinkers a different experience."

Stamps Too -

a Commitment to Live Music

If you enjoy live music with your pint then Stamps Too is the place to be from Thursday night through to Sunday with a number of bands and soloists to suit all music tastes. The list of bands due to play over the coming week are displayed on chalk boards both inside and outside the pub.

"We have never been a sports bar - our specialty is high quality



bands playing good music. At first there was a crossover with bands that played at Stamps, but then we developed our own style. I'm a guitarist and occasional keyboard player myself, so I had contacts - plus, when I'm not working, I like to visit other pubs that have live music and, if I like a band and think they'll go down well here, I book them!"



Frank on the Left

Stamps Too -

a Commitment to LocAle

There are five hand pumps taking pride of place at the front of the bar, serving ninety per cent LocAle beers. In 2009 Stamps Too became the first pub to be accredited LocAle by Liverpool Branch, (a LocAle beer being one

that is sourced from a brewery situated no more than 30 miles from the pub).

In 2012 at the Liverpool and District CAMRA Oscars Awards night, Stamps Too was awarded 'LocAle Pub of the Year', and a banner proudly announcing this was displayed outside the pub. This banner has now been replaced to make way for the new 'Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013' banner.

Frank is very proud of his commitment to LocAle. A very successful Liverpool CAMRA Locale celebration event was held at the pub in 2012 to celebrate 3 years of the scheme in Liverpool. The walls of the pub are adorned with pump clips depicting those ales which have been and gone, ales that are waiting in the cellar are displayed on the pillar next to the hand pumps.

Frank commented;

"The emphasis has always been on local beers - our main suppliers are Liverpool Organic, Brimstage and Southport. Then, when Mel James-Henry from the local CAMRA branch told me about the LocAle scheme, it gave us an added impetus. We were proud to be the first Liverpool pub to be accredited and to win the Liverpool CAMRA LocAle award."

Pride in the Award

Frank is justifiably proud that Stamps Too has been voted Pub of the Year, particularly as it is the first time a suburban pub has been given the prestigious title. Frank commented;

"I couldn't believe it, I was over the moon. It's great to have a pub outside the city centre winning - and even greater for me and all the staff that it's us!

Thanks to all who voted for any pub in the area, but special thanks for the Stamps Too votes. It really is appreciated by everyone here, and it makes it all worthwhile!!"

So, why not take a trip out to the suburbs - there are some excellent ales and a warm welcome waiting for you.

Presentation of the Award to Stamps Too

On April 30th the Award was presented to Frank and the staff at a special event held at Stamps Too, so it could be enjoyed by regulars and visitors alike. Frank was presented with the official Liverpool Branch 'Pub of the Year' certificate, and a banner announcing the award is now displayed outside the pub. Stamps Too will be invited to the Liverpool CAMRA Oscars Awards Night in Liverpool to be held in the summer. There they will be



officially presented with the Liverpool CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year Shield, which is held by the winner for twelve months. The Oscars is a prestigious event with media coverage of the various award winners receiving awards in recognition for their contribution to real ale and pubs.

How the Liverpool Branch Pub of the Year is Judged

For 2013 Liverpool and Districts CAMRA changed the voting system so that Branch members had the opportunity to vote for their favourite City Centre Pub and their favourite suburban pub.

Once all the votes had been counted the top five pubs were judged according to the criteria used for the CAMRA National Pub of the Year competition. This has been the practice used by Liverpool Branch over the last five

years. The National judging process looks at a variety of criteria, including Beer Quality, Clientele Mix, Pub Atmosphere, Value for Money, and Sympathy with CAMRA Aims.

As always, all the pubs were of a high standard, and I would like to thank all the judges for their careful assessment of the pubs and for their hard work.

Now for CAMRA Merseyside Pub of the Year

Each of the Merseyside CAMRA Branches has selected their branch Pub of the year. The winners for 2013 are;



Liverpool Branch - Stamps Too, Waterloo



St Helen Branch - Clock Face, Prescot



Southport Branch - Freshfield Hotel,



Wirral Branch - Gallaghers, Birkenhead

These four pubs will now be judged for the Award of CAMRA Merseyside Pub of the Year 2013. The winner will then go into competition with the Cheshire Pub of the Year for the Merseyside and Cheshire Regional award.

And then on to the CAMRA National Pub of the Year Competition

The Regional winner then goes forward to the CAMRA National Pub of the Year competition, which features the sixteen Regional winners from around the country. From these pubs national judges assess four finalists to compete for the overall winner of the CAMRA National Pub of the Year Award (see pages 19 and 21 for the current finalists and the winner).

And Next year on to 2014 Liverpool Pub of the Year Competition

For 2014 we will once again be encouraging as many CAMRA members as possible to vote in the Pub of the Year competition, as the more people who vote the more democratic the process. So please take the time to vote. Voting for 2014 Liverpool Pub of the Year will open at the beginning of January 2014 and you will be able to vote in several ways.

Further information will be published in the Winter 2013 edition of MerseyAle and on: www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk



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THE BEER DUTY
ESCALATOR IS SCRAPPED

**Escalator
STOPPED!**



The Government Beer Escalator which increased beer duty annually by 2 per cent above the rate of inflation, was stopped in the March Budget. Additionally there was a 1 penny cut in beer duty about which the Chancellor said "I expect it to be passed on in full to customers." He revealed that had the escalator continued there would have been a 3% rise in beer duty. Press reports indicated that the March inflation figures had risen to 3.5% due to rising energy prices, which with the escalator would have led to an increase in beer duty of 5.5%.

Since the escalator was introduced in 2008, beer tax has increased by 42%, driving up the cost of a pint and driving consumers away from their local pubs. In that time, 5,800 pubs have closed for good.

The CAMRA Stop the Escalator Campaign

On the back of last year's Budget, CAMRA launched its support for the e-petition calling an end to the tax and dedicated volunteers threw their wholehearted support behind it. Eight months' later, we reached the golden number of 100,000 signatures.

CAMRA's beer festivals were invaluable to this effort. At the annual Great British Beer Festival, CAMRA gathered 10,000 signatures alone.

Once we reached the 100,000 mark, we lobbied hard to get a debate in the main chamber of Parliament, where MPs unanimously agreed the escalator should be scrapped.

The campaign continued with the

Save Your Pint Mass Lobby on 12th December, a fantastic day where 1,200 CAMRA members met with over 180 members of parliament. CAMRA members have continued this campaigning by meeting and writing with their MPs right up to the day of the budget.



What the Chancellor Had to Say

The Chancellor's speech reflected many of the

campaign points made by CAMRA.

"Mr Deputy Speaker, there's another duty escalator – the annual two percent above inflation increases in alcohol.

We're looking at plans to stop the biggest discounts of cheap alcohol at retailers.

But responsible drinkers – and our pubs - should not pay the price for the problems caused by others.

The sad fact is that we've lost 10,000 pubs in the UK over the last decade.

Many Honourable Members have raised their concerns with me like my Honourable Friend for Bristol North West.

My Honourable Friend for Burton and Uttoxeter in particular has been a committed champion of the famous brewing industry that employs many of his constituents.

I intend to maintain the planned rise for all alcohol duties – with the exception of beer.

We will now scrap the beer duty escalator altogether.

And instead of the 3p rise in beer duty tax planned for this year I am

cancelling it altogether. That's the freeze people have been campaigning for. But I'm going to go one step further and I am going to cut beer duty by 1p. We're taking a penny off a pint. The cut will take effect this Sunday night and I expect it to be passed on in full to customers."

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, commented;

"Today's decision is a huge triumph for CAMRA's pub campaigners who have been building overwhelming public support for a fair deal for beer and pubs, pub by pub and beer festival by beer festival."



Greg Mulholland MP, Chair of the **Save the Pub** campaign speaking at the CAMRA Parliamentary rally in December.

International Beer Duty - A Comparison

And Yes Britain Pays the Most!
British Drinkers pay

EIGHT times the rate of Duty paid by French Drinkers

TEN times that of Spanish Drinkers

ELEVEN times that of German Drinkers

British Beer Duty has risen 42 percent in the last five years.

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10 Real Ciders

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bootbeer.co.uk

Elephant In the Room: The PubCos

The Coalition Government is heralding its stopping of the Beer Escalator and the one penny cut in beer duty, but the real story that is threatening the future of fifty percent of Britain's pubs is the Elephant in the Room – the policies of the PubCos.

The PubCo model is based on the income derived from licensees through the beer tie which charges licensees up to 50% more than they would pay for beer on the open market, and on high rents with upward only rent reviews. In addition at the height of the property market the PubCos placed high values on their pub estate, using these values to borrow large amounts of money from the banks. The collapse of the property market left the PubCos unable to repay these large debts.

then the property market and the values had collapsed along with the Punch share price. Punch then found themselves unable to repay the large debt and were struggling even to pay just the interest. Their only avenue was to bleed their lessees/licensees dry with high rents and the controversial Beer Tie.

"A Lot of What is Going On is Nothing More Than a Scam."

Greg Mulholland MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Save the Pub Group, has commented that PubCos were no more than property speculators and that their economic model is now in ruins due to the collapse of the property market values. It was the pub licensees who were paying the cost of the PubCo failures through high charges for beer and high rents, which were

These PubCos are in debt and the quickest way to get rid of it is to sell off the premises. That means a load of pubs will end up as housing or supermarkets, ripping the heart out of many communities.

It's heartbreaking. People are just trying to make a decent living and do their bit to keep pubs alive."

The Proposed Statutory Code of Practice is Central as to whether these Key Issues will be tackled

The Coalition Government indicated in January that it intended to introduce a Statutory Code of Conduct for PubCos – see MerseyAle February 2013 edition pages 13 to 15. This article indicated that the devil would be in the detail of the code, and that the danger was that the Coalition Government would put forward a Code that lacked any real teeth to protect licensees and enforce good practice on the PubCos. It also reported that the trade group, the British Pub and Brewers Association (BPBA), was pressing the government to tone down the Code. Its Chairman Jonathan Neame commented;

PubCos are Zombie Companies

MerseyAle February 2013 reported that the BBC File on Four radio programme had described Punch Taverns as a "Zombie Company", unable to repay its debts and struggling even to repay the interest on its loans. A feature of a Zombie Company is that it is unable to find the financial resources to invest in the business and is therefore facing a lengthy cycle of decline.

File on Four reported that Punch's pub estate had been valued at a high level some years ago and large loans in the order of £2 billion had been taken out on the strength of this valuation. Since



driving them into insolvency and closure of their pub.

He commented;

"A lot of what is going on is nothing more than a scam.

The anti-monopolies Beer Orders move of the Thatcher government went wrong. The PubCos are now as big as the major breweries ever were.

Politicians on all sides recognise that something needs to be done.

"In the consultation we will be urging the Government to ensure that any statutory process is light touch and cost effective, to protect the consumer from bearing the brunt of unreasonable additional costs." So you have been warned about what is coming!



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Worrying Comments by Vince Cable

In making the announcement about introducing a Code, Vince Cable, the Secretary of State for Business, stated that;

“Pubcos (are) exploiting and squeezing their publicans by unfair practices and a focus on short-term profits.” He also recognised that, “there is some real hardship in the pubs sector, with many pubs going to the wall as publicans struggle to survive on tiny margins. Some of this is due to PubCos exploiting and squeezing their publicans by unfair practices and a focus on short term profits”

However in a letter from Vince Cable dated 9th January which was forwarded to MerseyAle by Louise Ellman MP for Liverpool Riverside, he indicated that he was NOT going to act to change the highly controversial Beer Tie used by all the PubCos. This is very disappointing as most commentators have called for action on the Beer Tie, especially the introduction of a right for all PubCo licensees to be able to order at least one beer free of Tie. In the letter he wrote; “I would also like to be clear that I am not proposing to abolish the beer tie. The evidence strongly suggests that the tie, per se, is not the issue: when operated as envisaged and fairly, it is a valid business model being used responsibly by companies both large and small and, were it to be removed, the British brewing industry could be significantly disadvantaged. What is clear is that it is the abuse of the tie, like the abuse of rent calculations and

other factors, that is causing problems in certain circumstances.”

CAMRA Chief Executive, Mike Benner, commented:

“Over 3,500 tied public houses have been lost since the start of 2009. Many of these will have been lost as a result of excessive rents and by being forced to buy beer through the PubCo Beer Tie at up to 50% above market rates. The proposal for a “fair dealing” provision will allow publicans tied to large pub companies to challenge these high prices, which means fewer valued pubs will be forced to close their doors.

CAMRA fully endorses the Government’s wish to ensure

“Over 3,500 tied public houses have been lost since the start of 2009”

that tied publicans are no worse off than free of tie publicans. Research shows that 46% of tied publicans earn less than £15,000 per year in contrast to 22% of free of tie publicans.”

The Crunch Comes in the Summer

It is likely to be the summer before the Coalition Government finalises the detail of the Code and seeks Statutory powers.

It is vital that pressure is maintained on the Coalition Government to stick to its guns against the PubCos and the BPBA

and introduces a Code which has real teeth. CAMRA is pressing for three elements to be included in the Code;

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. That all PubCo licensees should have the right to stock a guest ale that is free of the beer tie, thereby allowing them to buy this beer on the open market.

2. Open market rent reviews for pubs with a right for the licensee to appeal to an independent assessor.

3. The right for licensees to negotiate free of tie arrangements with their PubCo.

Meanwhile it is vital that pressure is maintained on the Coalition Government and all MPs to ensure the result is a Code with teeth.

Brewery news special



Cains Plan £50 million Brewery Village

Company to Focus on Leisure and Tourism

In April Cains announced plans to develop the brewery site in Stanhope Street into a £50 million Brewery Village as the key element in a major change of direction for the company into a focus on tourism and leisure. The plan includes conversion of the existing "Terracotta Palace" brewery into a range of new multi purpose uses, in addition to constructing a number of large new buildings. A market appraisal of the site predicts it would attract about 500,000 visitors a year once complete.

Main Elements of the Plan include;

- The existing brewery building would be converted to house a new £1.5 million micro brewery and visitors centre, a food court and market, digital studios, boutique hotel accommodation, conference facilities and a new roof top bar with panoramic views across the city. The existing brewery plant would be removed and sold. The Brewery Tap pub would be expanded.
- There would be a 100 bed hotel, a spa and gym.
- The site behind the brewery would be developed as a multi storey car park.
- Adjacent to the car park would be an art house multiplex art house cinema with four screens.
- Stanhope Street would be opened to traffic and become the centre of the Brewery Village development.

•A second phase of development would build on the site of the current car park and storage shed to develop a large number of new build apartments with a supermarket on the ground floor.

The micro brewery would replace the existing brewing plant which would be removed and sold, resulting in a loss of 15 of the present 56 brewery jobs. The loss making brewing of supermarket beers and the canning plant would close. Cains Chief Executive Sudagbara Dusanj said;

"We want to create a major new tourism and leisure asset for the city which would secure the future of the Cains beer brand for decades to come.

Cities like Manchester and Newcastle have been unable to save their traditional breweries but we know this scheme will ensure Liverpool has a thriving and traditional brewery for future generations.

We anticipate increasing production of traditional ales by as much as 300% as a result of the scheme."

However he warned that the company was struggling to keep up the maintenance on the huge site and that failure to secure planning permission could have implications for the long term future of Cains.

A North American Concept

THE new vision for the Cains Brewery Village plan takes its inspiration from similar schemes in North America. Cains has spent nine months putting together the

scheme with consultants Colliers International and Liverpool architects Falconer Chester Hall (FCH). Detailed architectural drawings are yet to be drafted.

The Brewery Village concept has been hugely successful in North America, with examples being the Distillery District in Toronto and the Granville Island development in Vancouver.

FCH managing director Adam Hall said: *"We are taking inspiration from right across the world and have examined similar schemes in the US and Canada where they have brought the new and old together to create truly atmospheric and vibrant destinations."*

Backing From the Mayor and the MP

Louise Ellman MP for Liverpool Riverside said:

"The plan would see the restoration of one of the city's key heritage assets and the creation of a new visitor attraction for an important part of Liverpool. The proposals enable a proud brewing tradition in the city to become the focus of regeneration. I back these proposals."

Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson said: *"Proposals such as these are complex but are an indication of confidence in the city and its prospects. There is much work to be done to bring the scheme to fruition but we are fully behind the plans and extremely excited about the positive impact it will have on a key city site."*

"We understand the challenges businesses such as Cains face and believe this scheme is the right way forward for both the Cains brand and the city as a whole."

The Key Question of £50 million in Finance

So far there is no information about the financing of the scheme other than it is intended to take it forward in a joint venture with a property developer. The fact that Cains went into administration in 2008 owing £35 million before being bought back by the owners Dusanj brothers for £103,750 a process known as flat pack administration - see MerseyAle late winter 2008 edition online at www.liverpoolcamra.org, may act as a deterrent to potential investors



in the Brewery Village plan. It is often the case that multi use schemes such as this shed the less money making social elements such as the cinema, the spa, gym and food market as the scheme moves on and finance proves

difficult to raise. The New Brighton promenade development is a case in point.

Cains intend to submit a planning application in July with a view if approval is given of starting work on site in 2014.



Another New Brewery for Liverpool – and it's Not Just a Tea Party!

Liverpool has another new brewery, The Mad Hatter Brewing Company in Toxteth off Upper Parliament Street, close to the junction with Smithdown Road.

This is the brand new and rather exciting brewery of Gareth Matthews, a veteran home brewer of twenty years and formerly a philosophy lecturer at Liverpool University. Gareth finally saw the light and fled academia to start a microbrewery in Liverpool. His purpose built 100 litre "nano" brewery, (one stage smaller than a micro!), produces approximately 7 casks a week. It enables him to experiment with an array of brewing techniques - from



single infusion mashing to German and Belgian techniques. Gareth says that he is free to do what brewing style he wants, "unlike 99% of existing breweries that are tied to the old (and slightly dull) British techniques". He also plans to use wooden barrels for fermentation to give distinctive flavours.

The result is a massive range of fifteen proposed beers of many different styles. Mad Hatter beers have appeared at the Ship and Mitre, the Dispensary and Stamps Too, with ESB a 6% strong bitter, and a 5% Mild being amongst the first offerings

MerseyAle will run a feature on Mad Hatter in a future edition - provided it does not disappear down a rabbit hole.

The contact details are; Mad Hatter Brewing Company, Parliament Business Park, Commerce Way, L8 7BA, Tel: 0151 739 1702



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MerseyAlenews



SHOCK NEWS Property Developer and Admiral Taverns Sink Award Winning Caledonia Pub



Caledonia to be Closed Down on Sunday 26th May

of pub the Coalition Government claims to be keen to promote.

Loose Moose String Band who said:

"We're absolutely shocked and devastated about the news. The Cali has been our home from home the past three years and Laura has done an amazing job in turning it into a proper community pub. People have come from all over the world to play here and we've got absolutely no idea what we'll do without it."



Laura (and one of her best freinds)

Laura and the seven staff had been kept in the dark regards the deal. She will lose both her job and home with just 28 days notice and the staff will be made redundant. Some reward for success!

Speaking to the **'Liverpool Confidential'** website Laura said;

"We will be closing the pub for good on the exact third anniversary of the day I took it over. We should have been celebrating but instead I can't stop crying.

When I took over, the place was full of drug takers and scallies. Nobody was buying any drinks. I immediately threw them all out. All that was here was the bar. I went out and bought all the fixtures and fittings myself. I've worked day and night, with loyal staff, to turn it into a safe, warm environment with traditional pub values. We welcome everyone from young people and families to 80-year-olds and orchestra players."

Shock news at the end of April was that Preston based property developer **Marcus Worthington** had bought the award winning Caledonia pub on Catharine Street from Admiral Taverns and to was close it for redevelopment as student accommodation for Liverpool University. It was reported that **Admiral Taverns had "been made an offer they could not refuse"**, by the developer.

Admiral gave licensee Laura King just 28 days notice of not only the closure of the pub but also that she would be made homeless as she lives at the pub. Admiral will close the pub on Sunday 26th May, three years to the day since licensee Laura King took over and transformed it from a rundown dump into a successful award winning community and live music pub, which is now the heart of Liverpool's Bluegrass and Jazz scene. In 2011 the Caledonia won the Liverpool **CAMRA Live Music Pub of the Year Award**. Laura has transformed it into a valued community local, precisely the type

The importance of the Caledonia to Liverpool's live music scene is exemplified by John Daghish of

The Developer Marcus Worthington

Local Residents Oppose the Redevelopment Plans

The Caledonia sits next to the controversial Philharmonic Court scheme being built by Preston developer Marcus Worthington. Five existing student blocks are to be replaced by two linked buildings of up to six floors and 21 Georgian terraces are to be made available for private ownership.

Many local residents have opposed the scheme on the basis that it would house undergraduates, rather than the post-graduates and student nurses who had lived in the existing block. There have been fears among families who have made their homes on Catharine Street that this transient community would create a nuisance.

Marcus Worthington has not commented on its plans for the site of the Caledonia, but having paid a substantial sum to Admiral it is likely that they intend to demolish the building and redevelop it as part of the major Philharmonic Court development. The loss of the

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Caledonia will no doubt add to the opposition from local residents to the Marcus Worthington scheme.

Admiral Taverns – One of the Elephant in the Room PubCos

Admiral Taverns is one of the big national PubCos that between them run 50% of Britain's pubs. Admiral runs 1,200 pubs nationwide. The PubCos, having spent two years supping in the Last Chance Saloon, are now in the sights of the Coalition Government because of unfair business practices and are to be subject to a new government Statutory Code of Practice (see pages 9 and 11). Greg Mulholland MP and Chair of the **Save the Pub Group**, has described the actions of PubCos as **"nothing more than a scam"**.

Ironically in a press release issued in November 2012, Admiral described the Caledonia as

"an integral part of the Liverpool music scene..... since Laura King took over in 2010, it has rapidly become one of Liverpool's best live music pubs."

With further irony the Admiral Taverns website proclaims; *"Great community pubs, run by brilliant licensees, are at the heart of everything we do. Whether it's a traditional local, a "roses around the door" country inn or a vibrant city centre bar, we recognise that every one of our 1200 pubs is a focal point of the community.*

Admiral Taverns have become the UK's number one community pub group thanks to an unwavering focus on the working partnership we have developed with our licensees – all of whom run individual businesses in their own right."

MerseyAle can think one of Admiral's licensees who might wish to differ!

US Equity Firm Cerberus Take Over Admiral

In January 2013 Admiral Taverns was sold to a US private-equity firm

Cerberus Capital Management in a deal worth £200 million, including debt, bringing to an end a troubled period for Admiral that saw it fall into the hands of its bank, Lloyds. Cerberus Capital Management bought Admiral from Lloyds Banking Group. The part-nationalised Lloyds took control of Admiral after a painful debt-for-equity swap in 2009, but the sale to Cerberus erases £150 million of loans and ends Lloyds interest in the pub group.

Founded in 2004, Admiral had struggled with almost £1 billion of debt and announced plans to offload up to 100 unprofitable wet-letted pubs. It delivered underlying profits of £27 million in the year to June 2012.

Cerberus said that Admiral's management team - Chairman Jonathan Paveley, Managing Director Kevin Geogel, Property Director Andy Clifford and Finance Director Glenn Pearson - will continue to lead the business.

Andy Clifford, Property & Strategy Director of Admiral Taverns, said:

"From time-to-time we review the pubs in our estate and occasionally we do have to take the decision to sell a pub that no longer fits our criteria for ownership. The Caledonia is such a pub.

It is always our preference that any pub that we sell remains as a pub, although we have to accept that the issue of future use will ultimately pass into the hands of any new owner and of course the local planning authorities."

Liverpool University

Liverpool University has a policy of developing new build high quality student accommodation which will also be attractive to the conference delegate market. This has led to plans for demolition and redevelopment of existing University sites such as the Philharmonic Court development. Another example is the Brownlow Hill site which is to be redeveloped as high quality student and conference accommodation. The site includes the University run **Augustus John pub**, another Liverpool CAMRA Award winning

pub and the **Branch Cider Pub of the Year**. Early plans showed that the pub would be closed and demolished, but subsequent revision saw the retention of the AJ, as it is known colloquially. These development plans do raise questions about the University's stance on the presence and community value of existing premises and business affected by their planned developments.

What Can Be Done for the Caledonia?

On page 19 MerseyAle discusses what can be done for the Caledonia.

Now Please SIGN the online PETITION to SAVE the CALEDONIA

<https://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/pledge-your-support-to-savethecaledonia-campaign>

This has over 550 signatures in just one day – so sign NOW

Mayor of Liverpool Joe Anderson issued this message on twitter on 26th April;

Tweet from Mayor Anderson:- @joeforliverpool

People asking me about the Caledonia pub, only found out about it today. However now that it has been brought to my attention will sort.

A Party Not a Wake

The Caledonia is to close on Sunday, May 26, with a **Loose Moose String Band gig**. Clearly a case of going out with a bang, not a whimper.

MerseyAle spoke to Laura the day after the closure news about her plans;

"The closure news came as a shock.

I was deeply saddened and heartbroken. The Caledonia is a community pub which is here for its people and they love it and it has become a home for them. It is a shame that a business which is doing well is to be closed down.

However we want to celebrate everything the pub has been and what we have achieved here. We want to party and celebrate that, not cry.

I would like to take what we have got here and make something bigger and better and offer a new home to all the great bands that play here."



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What can be done for the CALEDONIA?



And What Can be Done for Other Pubs Under Threat?

The main problem in the case of the Caledonia is that Admiral Taverns have already sold the pub swiftly behind the backs of the licensee and the local community, which makes it more difficult to fight against closure. The sale, and the short 28 day notice given to licensee Laura King, makes it unlikely that the pub can continue to trade as at present even with strong campaigning. The main options for the Caledonia are therefore;

- To oppose any planning permission application by developers Marcus Worthington and Liverpool University to demolish the pub or to change the use.
- To seek to list the Caledonia as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act.
- To work with customers, the musicians and other performers to mount a political campaign to retain the pub as a vital community asset and a major contributor to Liverpool's music scene. Mayor Joe Anderson has already responded that he will investigate (see page17).

Threats to Other Pubs - What Can Be Done?

A major weakness of the planning system is its failure to give pubs protection against closure. Nationally CAMRA and MPs are lobbying the Coalition Government for planning protection to be given to pubs against closure. In addition CAMRA is endeavouring to maximise the use of the Localism Act to List Your Local as an Asset of Community Value. As development pressures grow in Liverpool, more of our pubs are

likely to come under threat of sale and redevelopment. Increasingly the PubCos will be looking to sell off their pubs to reduce their debts. Punch Taverns have indicated their intention to sell off around 4,000 of their less profitable pubs which they have designated as their "non Core" estate. See Greg Mulholland MP comments below regards sales by PubCos.

The List Your Local Campaign

The "List your Local" campaign, launched during CAMRA's Community Pubs Month, aims to get 300 UK pubs listed as Assets of Community Value in 2013. Listing a pub as an Asset of Community Value with the local council means a pub can't be sold on without the local community being told, can help the local council to refuse planning applications from developers and even gives the local community up to six months to put in a bid to buy the pub should it be put up for sale.

High property prices mean pubs are being targeted for conversion into supermarkets, fast food outlets, and housing developments. CAMRA's Chief Executive Mike Benner had this to say, "Three quarters of pub-goers believe that a well-run community pub is as important to community life as a post office, local shop or community centre, and as such CAMRA is delighted that the Government has recognised this and empowered communities to protect their pubs.

By listing their local, communities are ensuring that if the pub is under threat in the future, there is a much-needed extra layer of protection which



SIGN THE SAVE THE CALEDONIA PETITION see page 17

"stops the clock" should it be put up for sale. With 18 pubs closing every week and pubs increasingly a target for developers, this new power is a massive step forward in the battle to protect valued pubs."

Britain's pubs are very much at risk and need protection, not least from the PubCos like Admiral – see pages 9 and 11. As Greg Mulholland MP Chair of the Save the Pub Group says;

"These PubCos are in debt and the quickest way to get rid of it is to sell off the premises. That means a load of pubs will end up as housing or supermarkets, ripping the heart out of many communities. It's heartbreaking. People are just trying to make a decent living and do their bit to keep pubs alive."

Keep in Touch

If you would like to comment or to hear more about the campaign to Save our Pubs including the Caledonia then please email contact@mersecamra.org.uk

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May is Mild Month

Make Mine Mild

CAMRA promotes Mild throughout May. In Liverpool we held a launch event at the Richmond Pub and Hotel on the 2nd May. We have also encouraged pubs throughout the branch area to get involved by stocking one mild. **The Richmond Pub and Hotel** in Liverpool will be selling 5 different milds including a speciality pale and a golden mild made especially for them.

Liverpool CAMRA Mild Crawl 22nd May

There will be a mild crawl on the 22nd May, official start time is 7.30pm at **Thomas Rigby's** although some of us will be meeting in the **Lion** from 6.30pm – all welcome.

For further details on these events including which pubs are stocking mild please see website www.liverpoolCAMRA.org.uk

Merseyside Milds

At the time of going to print four Merseyside Breweries were planning to brew mild for May. **George Wright Brewery, Southport Brewery, Stamps Brewery and Wapping Brewery.**

Wapping will be brewing a new beer, **Stevedore Mild**, at a stronger 4.6% using 20% rye malt for sweetness, dark crystal malt and hopped with English Goldings to give a lower bitterness of 15 European Units of Bitterness (EBU).

Other Milds you may see around Liverpool include, Jennings Dark Mild, Okells Olaf, Sarah Hughes

Dark Ruby, Moorhouse's Black Cat, Timothy Taylor Golden Best and Theakston Traditional Mild and George Wright's Mark's Mild at the Dispensary.

If you have never tried Mild or are put off by the name, please use this month as a opportunity to **'Give Mild a try'**. And if you enjoyed it and would like to see it more often please ask your pub to stock it. Mild isn't just for May, a few pubs do stock it all year round, including Thomas Rigby and the Dispensary.



Mild

What is mild?

Milds are black to dark brown to pale amber in colour and come in a variety of styles from warming roasty ales to light refreshing lunchtime thirst quenchers. Malty and possibly sweet tones dominate the flavour profile but there may be a light hop flavour or aroma. Slight diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) flavours are not inappropriate. Alcohol levels are typically low.

Pale milds tend to have a lighter, more fruity aroma with gentle hoppiness.

Dark milds may have a light roast malt or caramel character in aroma and taste.

Scottish cask beers may have mild characteristics with a dominance of sweetness, smooth body and light bitterness.

We would love your feedback regarding mild, especially if you try it during mild month. If you find a favourite please let us know on merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

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Liverpool City of Beer Festivals

Liverpool has long been renowned for the **CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival** – the only Beer Festival in the World to be held in a cathedral. Well now Liverpool is to enjoy even more atmospheric beer festivals both large and small. For 2013 Liverpool Organic Brewery is holding no less than **FOUR** Beer Festivals, with two in Waterloo and two in Liverpool. The two new Festivals will be at the prestigious classical **St George's Hall** with places for 8,000 visitors over the four days in September featuring over 300



beers, plus a Christmas Festival at the recently renovated **Black-E** in December. Additionally the area boasts a number of smaller real ale Beer Festivals such as those held by the

Crosby and Rainhill Rotary Clubs and the Liverpool Cricket Club at Aigburth.

On pages 36 to 37 we give you a photographic taste of the 2013 CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival in the Catholic Cathedral Crypt, to whet the appetite.

THE GRAPES

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CAMRA NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR THE FOUR FINALISTS



Greater Manchester - Baum

Rochdale (33-37 Toad Lane, Greater Manchester, OL12 0NU) thebaum.co.uk



A split-level hostelry with old world charm next door to the world's first co-operative store. The Baum has eight handpumps, one dedicated to cider, and a large variety of continental bottled beers. Excellent food includes vegetarian dishes, with a tapas menu available at weekends. There is an upstairs dining/function room. The large rear garden, overlooked by a conservatory, contains two full-size pétanque pistes. Local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2009 and 2012.

South West - Tom Cobley Tavern

Spreyton (Devon, EX17 5AL) tomcobleytavern.co.uk



Family-run 16th-century village local, which still maintains the standards that won it CAMRA's National Pub of the Year a few years ago. There is an open fire in the bar and in Jimmy's Snug children and dogs are welcome. On a warm day you can enjoy the surroundings of the large picturesque garden. Home-cooked food and daily specials are on the menu, plus traditional roasts on Sunday (booking advisable). Six comfortable guest rooms are available for night stops at this genuine gem.

Kent - Conqueror Alehouse

Ramsgate (4C Grange Road, Kent, CT11 9LR) conqueror-alehouse.co.uk



Superb micropub, probably the smallest free house in Thanet, offering a fine selection of mainly local ales straight from the cask, as well as local Broomfield cider. Opened in November 2010 by an ex-local CAMRA chairman, it has room for about 20 customers. Named after a two-funnelled paddle steamer that operated excursions from Ramsgate in the early 1900s, old photos of the ship and its crew adorn the walls. This cosy, friendly pub offers a pleasant music- and TV-free atmosphere.

Wales - Bridge End Inn

Ruabon (5 Bridge Street, Wrexham, LL14 6DA) mcgivernales.co.uk



This former coaching inn near the station, owned by the McGivern Brewery with brewing on the premises, was voted CAMRA National Pub of the Year 2012. The welcoming three-roomed local has a whitewashed exterior and cosy public bar, reputed to be 300 years old, with a beamed ceiling and walls adorned with old breweriana. Children are welcome in the lounge until 7pm and there is a quiet room. Six changing guest ales include a stout and McGivern ale, plus a real cider. Groups can be

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CASTLE ST 62

catered for by arrangement. Live music features on Wednesday. A note for visitors is that the Bridge End is just a three minute walk at the end of the station approach road from Ruabon station, which has an hourly train service from Chester. Check pub opening times as on some days it opens evenings only.

Plus the Shortlisted Pub for Merseyside & Cheshire Region

Lower Chequer

Sandbach (Crown Bank, Cheshire, CW11 1FW)



A warm welcome is assured from the award winning licensees who have rejuvenated this black and white timbered pub set back on the cobbled square. Dating from 1570, the interior has two rooms and outside there is seating to the front and a marquee and patio to the rear. Six real ales on offer, all from small breweries, with Beartown Kodiak Gold a regular plus other local and regional ales. A porter, mild or stout is always available as well as a cider and a perry.

CAMRA National Pub of the Year

And the Overall National Winner is

Baum Rochdale

The Baum, Rochdale, Lancashire has been crowned the best pub in Britain by CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. CAMRA's National Pub of the Year competition recognises all

the criteria that make a great pub, including atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, value for money, customer mix, but most importantly, the quality of the beer.

The building, which sits next door to the Pioneers Museum, which is the original Co-op store, has only been a pub for around 30 years and was converted from Morris's Hardware Store in the 1980's.

Simon Crompton, one of the owners, started work in The Baum in 1993 and became manager in 1994. In 2005, Simon and his wife Heidi, who co-owns the business, bought the pub just two days after having their first child.

There are now eight hand pumps serving a changing range of real ales, including at least one LocAle, plus a hand pump for real cider. The upstairs dining room serves home

cooked food making use of local ingredients. The Baum's philosophy is "buy local, shop local."



On hearing the news, Heidi Crompton said;

"We were ecstatic to hear that we had been voted CAMRA's National Pub of the Year. We are very proud of the team that have played an important role in The Baum's success and it is a testament to their hard work that the consumers have recognised

our pub with this prestigious award."

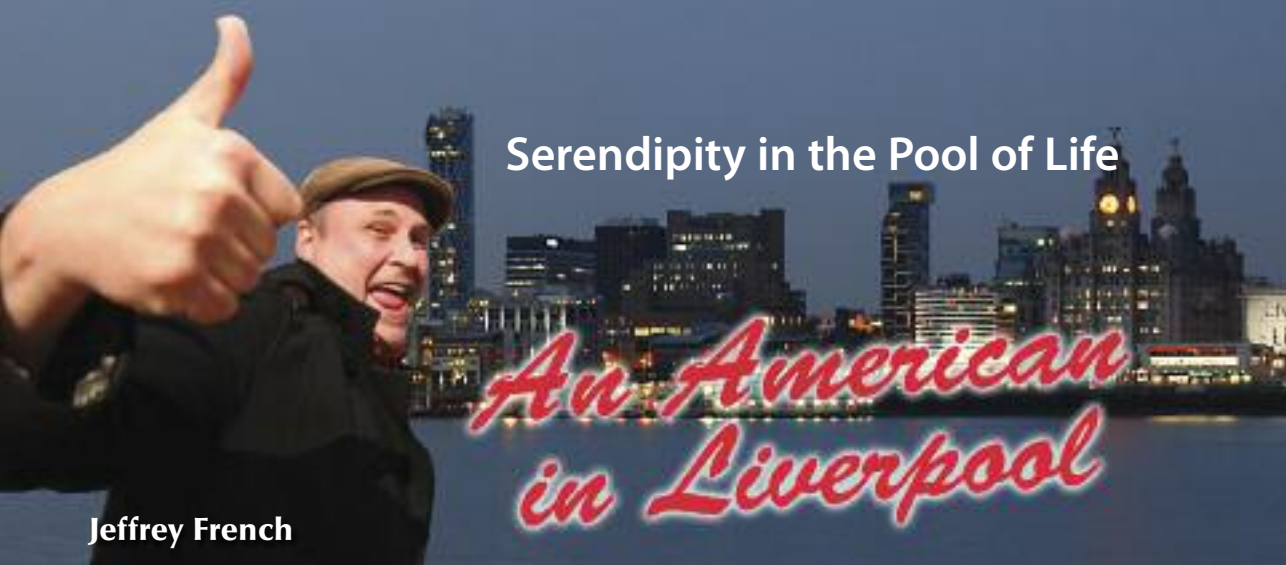
Heidi continued, "We are a family run pub with our values influencing every aspect of the business in relationships with our staff and suppliers. We are dedicated to the 'buy local, shop local' initiative, always willing to support independent businesses. The support from the regular customers and local CAMRA members is valued and we would like to thank everyone for their continued support."

CAMRA's Pubs Director, Julian Hough was delighted with this year's winner and said, "I would like to congratulate Simon, Heidi and all of the staff at The Baum on winning CAMRA's national award. This close to town pub has a winning formula which is well supported by customers. The range of quality products and their fresh modern approach means I'm delighted to crown The Baum our National Pub of the Year. Go and see it for yourself and experience what a brilliant pub it is".

Peter Alexander, Chairman of Rochdale, Oldham and Bury CAMRA said, "Clearly we are

absolutely thrilled that the Baum has been chosen as CAMRA's National Pub of the Year. While we locally know how good a pub the Baum is, it is fantastic to have this confirmed by senior judges who have never

visited it before. Given that the Baum was up against some tremendously fierce competition, Simon and Heidi have done a tremendous job. There is no higher accolade in pub awards and we in the local CAMRA branch are very proud to have Britain's best pub in our area."



Serendipity in the Pool of Life

An American in Liverpool

Jeffrey French

"Serendipity" is a wonderful, uniquely English word, coined in the mid eighteenth century by Horace Walpole, who derived it from the ancient Persian tale, "The Three Princes of Serendip", in which the central characters stumble upon wonderful things, accidentally.

We sometimes call these discoveries "happy accidents", but that sounds too much like chance. Serendipity comes to those already searching for something, through a combination of intuition and experience.

I've experienced a few moments of serendipity over the years, which have changed my life. Meeting the woman I would marry and raise a family with, for instance. Discovering my father's camera as a young boy. Or visiting Liverpool for the first time.

Living in San Rafael, California, I met a Liverpudlian named Ian McCoy, fifteen years ago. Every year he'd go home to Liverpool for the holidays, and one year he invited me along. It was the first week of January 2000, and it was very cold. The shops and pubs were quiet, as Liverpool recuperated from millennial celebrations.

Despite the less-than-welcoming weather and mostly empty streets, what I discovered in Liverpool was a city steeped in history and populated by the most genuine, genial people I've ever met. During that first visit, I discovered many things that would stay with me, and bring me back. But few things inspired my return like the

pubs. There really isn't anything quite like it in America. Try as we might (and we do try) it just isn't the same.

In my opinion Liverpool pubs are very special places. Within those pubs I discovered another wonderful thing. Real ale. Once I sampled my first cask-conditioned bitter, it was as if I was tasting beer for the first time.

Liverpool was more than just inviting. I felt as if I'd belonged there all along. And every visit in the thirteen years since has felt like a homecoming.

Darting to Win Each Way

In 2003, inspired by the stories and people I'd met in Liverpool, I produced a short film, "Win Each Way", which was set in Merseyside. The exteriors for the film, which centers on a high stakes game of darts, were mostly shot in



Mayflower California

Merseyside. The interiors were all shot here in California, at a pub called The Mayflower - about as close to a British pub as you'll find

on this side of the Atlantic.

"Win Each Way" went on to win awards at film festivals, and was intended to be a springboard for a feature film I wanted to produce entirely in Liverpool, also set in the world of pub darts, titled "Mugs Away". Unfortunately, that project is still stuck in development.

Quizzing

By 2005, I was a regular fixture at The Mayflower pub. Although I was no more than a casual player of the pub quiz held there weekly, the landlord asked me to fill in for the quizmaster when he left, until a permanent replacement could be found.

Armed with little knowledge of trivial things, and a serious fear of public speaking, I gave it a shot. That was over eight years ago. I've since written and 'emceed' over 700 quizzes, without ever finding that "permanent replacement".

Filmmakers with limited budgets are often encouraged to choose subjects close at hand, if not close at heart. And so, with no immediate prospects for producing my feature-length Liverpool darts film, I decided in 2011 to begin production on a documentary with a subject very close at hand - competitive quiz culture.

Last summer, my film crew began production on a documentary that explores the world of quizzing - from neighbourhood pubs, where high scores earn bottles of wine or a few dollars, to television game shows, where contestants win fortunes.



Mayflower London

The Two Mayflowers

I knew all along the project would lead my crew to England, where the pub quiz is ubiquitous, and so I arranged to film at a London pub I'd visited many times before - The Mayflower, in Rotherhithe. And, yes. It shares the same name as my own California local.

The London Mayflower made a great location, providing the opportunity to cut back and forth between quiz teams answering the same questions in different pubs - one in California, the other in London, both called "The Mayflower". Perfect bookends.

Bootle Leads the World !

Once the London shoot was approved, I set about researching the origin and history of pub quizzing, and discovered

something truly wonderful. The world's first organized quiz league was formed in Bootle, in 1959. Fifty-four years later, the organization known as "Merseyside Quiz Leagues" is still going strong, making it the longest-running quiz league in the world.

Serendipity intervened again. I was headed to Liverpool to make a film, after all.

My film crew arrived in Liverpool on February 18th. Merseyside Quiz Leagues' General Secretary, Cliff Houghton, arranged for us to film a league match in progress and interview league players, including current "Egghead", Pat Gibson,



whose accolades include wins on "Mastermind" and "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire".

With help from friend Liverpool

CAMRA Committee member Neil Lloyd, we also filmed a quiz at my favorite Liverpool pub, the Roscoe Head, which included an interview with Licensee, Carol Ross.

On our days off we attended the Liverpool Beer Festival and visited some of my other favorite pubs - The White Star, The Ship & Mitre, The Dispensary, The Philharmonic, and The Belvedere Arms, where we made new Liverpool friends and memories.

All told, it was a very productive trip for us, made all the more special by taking place in my "home away from home".

Thank you, Liverpool. And thank you, serendipity.

(American spelling retained – Editor)

JEFFREY FRENCH

Jeffrey French is an award-winning filmmaker who holds a B.A. in Cinema, from San Francisco State University, and is a member of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. He owns and operates Ton Eighty Media, a small production company located in Marin County, California, where he lives with his wife and two children.

The Pool of Life – Liverpool

Serendipity, Synchronicity, Carl Jung and Liverpool



"I FOUND myself in a dirty, sooty city. It was night, and winter, and dark, and raining. I was in Liverpool."

"With a number of Swiss, I walked through the dark

streets. I had the feeling that we were coming up from the harbour, and that the real city was actually up above, on the cliffs.

"We climbed up there. When we reached the plateau, we found a broad square, dimly illuminated by street lights, into which many streets converged."

The words were written by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung in his his book "Memories, Dreams, Reflections", a seminal work on the importance of dreams to understanding the unconscious, and the important



roles of serendipity and synchronicity.

Jung developed the concept of synchronicity which can be described as "meaningful coincidences" which convey important messages regards our lives. The book records his

Liverpool dream of 1927, which is believed to refer to the junction of the many streets centred on Mathew Street.

Jung's words were to inspire Peter O'Halligan to establish the Liverpool School of Language Music, Dream and Pun in a warehouse at 18 Mathew Street, now the location of Flannigan's Apple. If the School had had a register it would have read like a Who's Who of British Culture and Alternative Liverpool. On the wall is a plaque "Liverpool the Pool of Life" commemorating Jung, his famous words, and the School. See www.liverpoolconfidential.co.uk 'Jung's Pool of Life a plaque unveiled', which explains the symbolism.

So Jeffrey French has another "meaningful coincidence" and "happy accident" to connect him to Liverpool the Pool of Life.

There could be another movie in this, Jeffrey!

John Armstrong

In the court of King Arthur

Peter Kavanagh's Hosts Liverpool CAMRA Get Together



"King" Arthur

The cover of this edition of MerseyAle may be strangely familiar to readers. Some will recognise the Cezanne painting, "The Card Players", on which it is based, whilst others may recognise the setting as one of the side rooms at Peter Kavanagh's on Egerton Street, off Catharine Street. By special arrangement the Liverpool CAMRA Branch Get Together in March was held at PK's, probably Liverpool's most eccentric pub interior, thereby enabling members to discover its history and unique arts and crafts interior, all enlivened through a fascinating account by PK's Arthur Mitchell.

One might imagine all that could be said about Peter Kavanagh's has been said or written, but hearing it all again from PK's Arthur Mitchell while admiring the interior décor of this wonderful building is certainly something one won't forget in a hurry. Distinguishing anecdote from fact was occasionally challenging, but by the end of proceedings I didn't think it mattered. Mind you, I might want to



visit again so taking issue with the erudite Arthur wasn't something I was about to do in a hurry!

Originally called the Grapes, but Peter Kavanagh's or PK's, as it's been known for as long as anyone present could remember, was for some time just the end building on



Egerton Street, before expanding into the adjoining houses. Irishman Peter Kavanagh, 24, acquired the pub in 1897 and ran it for an astonishing 53 years.

That's only half the story. Once inside the jaw-droppingly ornate features become obvious. While Arthur convincingly explained that the wall paintings in the two side rooms were payment in kind for an outstanding bar bill, the truth is rather more mundane. They were probably a commission from Kavanagh to the artist Eric Robinson. Just as remarkable are the oak wood panels depicting eighteenth century drinking scenes, carved heads on the bench arms which are alleged to be caricatures of Kavanagh and the twist-lock tables designed and later modified by Kavanagh. These were based on the tables used on the Cunard liner Lusitania which were



designed to avoid glasses sliding from the table in heavy seas. The fire grate fender in the back room is reputedly cut from one of the early wheel tyres of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway's famous Rocket locomotive.

We all listened, intrigued, as stories unfolded about the man whose tenancy encompassed half a century and two world wars.



Ultimately, Arthur escorted us to the cellar where, after suitably expert tuition from the master, we were invited to tap and vent a cask. "Don't worry", he said reassuringly, "it's only water!" As if he'd let any of us make a mess!

Geoff Edwards

Come Along to Future Liverpool CAMRA Get Togethers

Over the last two years Liverpool CAMRA meeting have taken a new form – the Get Together – which emphasises the social aspect of CAMRA activities. Future Get Togethers are listed on page 55 and include a Meet the Brewer guided beer tasting, a summer pubs walk, a special quiz night and coach trip to a new real ale outlet. So give it a try!



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Student Friendly

Liverpool CAMRA Battling for the British Pub



CAMRA was set up in 1971 to Battle for the Survival of Real Ale. Now in the second decade of the Twenty First Century the focus is the Battle for the Survival of the British Pub.

CAMRA won the Battle for Real Ale. Now can CAMRA win the Battle for the British Pub?

Without the pub you would not be able to enjoy a pint of cask conditioned beer. Without the pub there would be no real ale and no real ale brewers. Without the pub many villages and towns would be without a vital centre for a social meeting place and community activities. Without the pub the heart would be cut from an iconic British way of life.

The pub is an iconic part of Britain's cultural heritage. But it is also the home of that other iconic British feature – real ale. The pub is vital to the future of real ale. Without the pub there would be nowhere to drink cask conditioned beer.

Yet nationally **EIGHTEEN** pubs are closing **EVERY WEEK**. Pubs have never been under greater pressure – see PubCos – the Elephant in the Room pages 9-11.

Liverpool CAMRA has campaigned constantly for our local pubs. Liverpool pubs are special and are the heartbeat of the city. They are special both architecturally and socially. It is not without reason that we call Liverpool the Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain, with an unbeatable combination of great pubs and real ale.

The CAMRA Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival

The CAMRA Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival has been an annual feature of the Liverpool events

calendar. It showcases Liverpool real ale pubs and features a programme of events to encourage people to visit the pub and try real ale. The Festival has been running for seven years in September/October and has attracted much interest and publicity.



The CAMRA Liverpool Pubs Map

Known previously as the Liverpool Pubs Passport, this full colour fold out map provides maps and guidance to 125 real ale pubs in the City Centre and suburbs. The Map is a vital aid for visitors to Liverpool and highlights the wealth of Liverpool pubs to enjoy.

Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival 2012 Part Two



Liverpool CAMRA Campaigning to Save and Promote the British Pub

Below read about the 2012 Pubs Festival – part one of this article appeared in MerseyAle February 2013 edition pages 33 to 37 and can be read online on www.liverpool.camra.org.uk In Part Two we focus on the well attended Pub Games night and the Visit to Liverpool's L1 Brewery

The Pub Games Night at the Lady of Mann

Report by Jan Sorsby

It was with some trepidation that Jean Pownceby embarked on the planning of this 'new territory' event! It had first been suggested when she asked women who supported the Snowball campaign events what other activities they would like to see.

'A pub games night' said Menna Jones, an enthusiastic attendee of the women's events that have been held as part of the Snowball campaign over the past 20 months. Well, you can't ask and not deliver! But what you can do is to persuade



that person to come 'on board' to plan how to do it. Luckily, Menna was more than willing to help with making her idea come to fruition. The first thing that was decided was not to make it specifically for women only, and the second that it should be part of the Autumn Pubs Festival. Where should it be, and what games do we want, and how can we get them, were the next questions.

The Lady of Mann

This pub was chosen as the venue in view of its perfectly sized back room and the observation that it



already has a darts board. It also has three real ales, including the house Okells bitter and two changing beers and a very co-operative manager and staff. Moreover, it transpired they also

stock dominoes, chess and other table games that they were happy for us to use.

The Games

We needed some more 'active' games, which were kindly loaned to us by the Southport CAMRA Branch who have pub games at their annual Sandgrounder Beer



Festival. We were able to incorporate skittles, shut the box and shove ha'penny into our portfolio for the night. We felt that



five games would probably be enough but the icing on the cake came when CAMRA member Dave Stevenson, who had booked to attend the evening, offered to bring along his Victorian bagatelle board.

The Big Night

And so, the night itself! CAMRA Committee members plus the

whole Snowball Campaign Team turned up promptly to set up, assisted by the helpful staff of the Lady of Mann.

The evening got under way with six teams of four people rotating round the games. Each game had a 'helper' to ensure people knew what they were



'Really enjoyed it. It worked very well'

'Wonderful – you've done very well - a good turnout'

'Really nice – would like to play them more often'

'Last saw these games when I was a child - good to see them again and to play'

'I've loved it – basically they need to do this in pubs more often - our generation has lost it!'

'I've practised now and want to come back and play again and win!'

'Good way to get to know people'

'It was an extraordinary evening. It really took me back to when pubs were pubs and there were no distractions and people just enjoyed themselves. While we were in teams, it didn't matter that some of us weren't very good. It was the taking part that mattered.'

'I've practised now and want to come back and play again and win!'

'Good way to get to know people'

'It was an extraordinary evening. It really took me back to when pubs were pubs and there were no distractions and people just enjoyed themselves. While we were in teams, it didn't matter that some of us weren't very good. It was the taking part that mattered.'

doing (did we?!) and to assist with the score sheets. Within minutes the room was a buzz of noise and laughter and continued that way. At the end comments were sought from the players.

What the Players Said

'Another brilliant idea, I've learnt a lot of new games that I didn't know how to play'



So What Next?

It looks as though these Pubs Games Night certainly won't be a one-off! One other person suggested that more games, quizzes and heritage walks are needed for Branch Get Togethers and we will take this on board as a good way of spreading the Pubs Festival bonhomie throughout the year.

Jan Sorsby

The Visit To Liverpool One Brewery

Report by Jean Pownceby

This was a 'Snowball' campaign event with a difference!



The Liverpool CAMRA Snowball Campaign is designed to "Bring New People to Real Ale", especially women and young people, and in 2012 it won the CAMRA National Award for Innovation in Membership.

The evening at Liverpool One

Brewery was an event targeted for women, but on this occasion women were invited to bring male partners or friends if they wished. Nice to get the boys out on a Friday night!

Forty five people attended at the kind invitation of Paul, the manager of the brewery. Contrary to its name, the brewery is actually in Liverpool 3, on Vauxhall Road to be specific.

A Warm Welcome Awaited Us

Some people were completely new to L1 beers but soon converted as they joined others of us, pleased to try our favourites - in particular the



Maharaja and the Liverpool Light - at their source.

Paul gave a talk about the brewery and the brewing process, evidence of which was all around us - no

separate rooms here - you really are where the brewing happens! Many questions were asked and responded to, and a very convivial evening ensued, with bowls of tasty Scouse, courtesy of the Bridewell pub, to soak up the beer. It was pleasing to see so many

people new to CAMRA who had the opportunity to see firsthand how beer is brewed.

Many thanks to Paul for his hospitality, and for a thoroughly enjoyable evening. If you would like to arrange a brewery visit, contact him on info@liverpoolonebrewery.co.uk

To find out more about the Liverpool CAMRA Snowball campaign read the past two years' MerseyAles on line on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk and/or email contact@merseycamrs.org.uk

Jean Pownceby

Reflections on the Festival

The Festival provided a showcase of all that is best about pubs. If you missed out, don't forget that good things go on all the time in pubs. It's a question of getting out there to explore what's on offer, doing something different in convivial surroundings and company whilst enjoying real ale and supporting our much cherished pubs.

The latest CAMRA surveys show that pubs are closing at the rate of eighteen a week, with great damage to community life in Britain. When it comes to pubs the old adage applies, "use 'em or lose 'em."

Looking Forward

For 2013 we are planning to move away from a fixed period pubs Festival in September/October to an approach of having an advertised programme of CAMRA pub events spread throughout the year. This conveys that message that the pub is for everytime and everyone and not just for the Festival. These events will be advertised in MerseyAle and on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk So look out for them and meanwhile visit the pub!

Jean Pownceby

Introducing..... **Pi (Rose Lane)**
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Great Beer, Great Pub, Shame about the Toilets

CAMRA is committed to campaigning for real ale and supporting pubs that sell real ale. Promoting the pub is a specific campaign aim of the Liverpool CAMRA Branch – see pages 31-33. We reward good pubs and good beer with entries in the Good Beer Guide and through nominating our Pub of the Year and Pubs of Excellence.

But does CAMRA campaign sufficiently about issues that extend beyond the beer pump - issues such as level access, the availability of a glass water or the comfort of the seating?

Being very specific, how much consideration do we give to pub toilet facilities?

For many people, including people who are infirm, have a disability, or a hidden disability such as a continence problem, a pub with a usable, clean, accessible toilet is the difference between visiting a pub or staying at home.

We have tended to accept pubs with filthy, smelly toilets, no soap, or no hot water as "having character". Toilets located along dark corridors or up steep stairs are no better either. I'll spare the blushes of any offending licensees but some pubs in Liverpool have truly appalling toilet facilities. Great pubs, yes, but awful facilities nonetheless.

Good Toilets

There are examples of good toilets. The majority are in refurbished pubs where there has been substantial work undertaken, which obviously makes it easier to install good quality toilets. However these do still need

to be well designed, serviced regularly and kept clean and up to standard.

Nationally the leader is JD Wetherspoon pubs. Yes, they usually have the head start of a major refurbishment, but nevertheless the company then demonstrates its commitment through high quality toilet design including well designed and located toilet facilities for those with a disability. Their toilets are usually serviced regularly and kept clean.

This commitment has been recognised with several national awards, especially the Loo of the Year Awards, in which JD Wetherspoon has been a regular winner in the pubs and wine bars category. However even with Wetherspoon there is the regular design feature of the main toilets often being located either up or down long flights of stairs and corridors so as to maximise the sales space on the ground floor.

In Liverpool another good example of good toilets in a refurbished building is the Hub on Hanover Street.

The Inexcusable

Clearly our older traditional pubs do not have the head start of a major refurbishment. Yet it is inexcusable for any toilet to stink to high heaven, to have no toilet paper, soap, water, towels or working hand dryers and locks on cubicles. These are the basics that any customer in what is a food establishment has a right to expect and which any pub should deliver.

Cue Toilet Jokes

Toilets tend to be one of those issues that can be easy to dismiss in a light hearted jokey way, (cue the puns such as chains of honour, flushed



with success, going round the bend etc).

But for a person suffering from a continence problem, a desperate urge to visit a toilet is no laughing matter, that's for sure. The poor toilet facilities can be a major deterrent for visiting the pub.

Liverpool CAMRA Better Toilet Campaign

Liverpool CAMRA is launching a campaign to improve the toilet facilities in our pubs. We are urging drinkers and licensees alike to raise the profile of pub facilities as an integral component of a good pub.

We want to hear from you about our pub toilets, both good and bad. MerseyAle readers are invited to email facilities@merseycamra.org with their comments on pub facilities in the Liverpool Branch area. This is with a view to recognising and rewarding pubs offering the best facilities, or who are striving to improve their facilities, for everyone's benefit.

Huw Jenkins

The Globe



The Globe is a small, very cosy traditional two roomed local opposite Central Station and close to main shopping area. It is a very lively pub and is popular with both locals and visitors alike. Watch out for the sloping floor!

Opening times 11 (10 Sat) -11
12-10.30 Sun 0151 707 0067

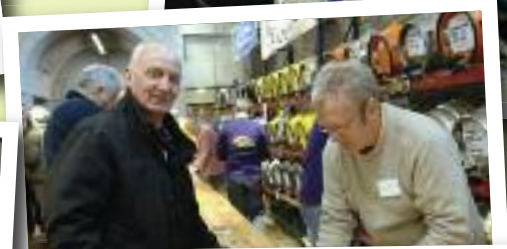


5 Handpumps

17 CASES STREET L11HW

CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival 2013

Over 250
Beers and
Ciders
Enjoyed
by over
4,000
People



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ManxAle

Major Success for RAM2

Real Ale of Man 2 Beer Festival
Launches New Beers for RNLI



Isle of Man CAMRA's second beer festival was again held at the Masonic Hall in Douglas, proving to be a huge success, with over 1800 visitors, 230 of whom were from the U.K. With increased hall



capacity and an increased beer range, the Festival was even bigger and better, whilst thankfully this year's increased beer supply did not run out!



On Island Breweries Support for RAM 2



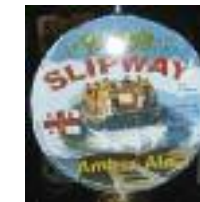
Main RAM 2
Sponsors were
Heron and
Brearley

Again there was
tremendous

support from all the on Island breweries for the Festival and CAMRA.

Heron & Brearley had recently launched the rebranded Okell's brewery beers, and were RAM2's main sponsor. Additionally they provided technical support by way of installing hand-pumps on the temporary bar. These were used to showcase and emphasise the wealth of local ale being produced on Island, with an impressive seventeen local brews available on the bar.

Bushy's produced a new amber ale called Slipway at 4.0%. This was to



recognise and celebrate both the ninetieth year since Douglas, Castletown and Ramsey R N L I

branches were registered as Manx Charities, and also the 190th anniversary of Sir William Hillary's appeal to the nation for the establishment of the RNLI. Sir William had close links with the Isle of Man and provided the lifesaving landmark, the Tower of Refuge, in the often stormy Douglas bay. The Mayor of Douglas, David Ashford, poured the first pint, and ten pence for every pint of Slipway sold will be donated to the RNLI.

The new Jurby Doghouse Brewery produced a Manx Coffee Porter (MCP) specially for the event, again with proceeds going to the RNLI. At 5.2% and with subtle coffee flavours, this was the



strongest Island brew on offer at the festival; slightly ahead of the excellent Okell's seasonal

strong bitter, Steam, at 5.0%.

As ever Old Laxey

Bosun Bitter was available, making a rare appearance outside the Shore Hotel, Laxey, the site of this smallest of microbreweries.



Island Brewer's Meet the Brewer and Question and Answer Session

Once again, all the Island breweries took part in a Meet the Brewer question and answer session. Some thorny topics were discussed, such as pricing differentials



between pubs and supermarkets, beer tax duty, and the newly termed 'craft beers', which are controversial in CAMRA circles. Many feel that the term Craft Beer is so woolly and loosely used as to lack any real meaning, and that they are in fact keg beers under another name (see MerseyAle Spring 2012 pages 29 to 31). This team appearance by all

the Island brewers is testament to the brewer's collective commitment to the IOM real ale cause and is a credit to them all.

Beer of the Festival – George Wright Pure Blond

George Wright Pure Blonde Best bitter at 4.7% brewed in Rainford,



Merseyside was the most popular beer of the festival by voting, and the ciders and perries proved particularly popular. There is certainly a significant demand out there for real cider and perry at large on Island events, something that the trade may wish to note, and which has taken some in CAMRA Isle of Man circles by surprise.

Thanks go to all involved in the festival, and particularly once again to Heron & Brearley for this year's sponsorship and technical support.

Soon it may be FIVE !

New Island Brewery planned – the Hooded Ram



HOODED RAM
BREWING COMPANY

Some on Island have been aware that a fifth Island brewer may be about to open. Details are now becoming available. Named **Hooded Ram Brewery**, the plant is being purchased from the Three Kings Brewery across. Discussions are ongoing, but it is hoped the

brewery location will be in Douglas and that it may be in production sometime this summer.

Bushy's TT Tent Saved

Following on from the February 2013 MerseyAle report, thankfully common sense did after all prevail, and the Bushy's TT beer tent will be back this year for the races in June, in its usual location near the Sea Terminal. The TT would not be the TT without the Bushy's Tent!

New Okells Micro brewery could save Okell's Mild

Okell's are to install a microbrewery to allow them more flexibility to experiment with smaller batches of new brews. MerseyAle February 2013 reported



the recent demise of Okell's Mild. This was not because nobody was drinking it, but because the current brewery plant cannot produce sufficiently small batches to make the style economic to produce given current consumption rates. The new microbrewery will be able to brew the required smaller quantity economically, so we look forward to the reappearance of Okell's Mild.



Doghouse Brewery Grows

D o g h o u s e B r e w e r y continues to grow following its start up in September 2012. Doghouse beers are now stocked regularly in the Bay View (Port St Mary), Railway (Union Mills), the Sulby Glen Hotel

(Sulby), as well as featuring from time to time across the Island in up to twenty one pubs.

Pressure at the Hand Pumps

The Isle of Man is a limited market with a population around the 80,000 mark. As such with two recent entrants into the market, (Doghouse and soon Hooded Ram), there is likely to be considerable local competition for hand pump space on the bar. Whilst this is healthy for the market, and for local licensees and customers, it may be that the export market will need to be revisited by some on Island brewers. Traditionally the 75-80 mile stretch of water, along with logistical problems of exporting cask conditioned beer and getting expensive empty casks returned, has proved problematic for exports. After a prolonged period of relative brewery stability on Island since 1997, the market is now changing rapidly.

Focus on the Grosvenor Andreas -

A Successful Pub is the Hub.

With many rural U.K. pubs closing and under threat, there are still plenty of success stories for pubs and licensees setting their stall out well in difficult times.



The Grosvenor in Andreas village, the Island's most northerly pub is one such success story. It is situated away from passing trade, several miles north of Ramsey. It is on the 17/18/20 bus route. Over the last five years the Grosvenor had a history of repeated closures and reopenings under different licensees, and it was feared the pub would be lost forever.

However, under the stewardship of Bobby Gaines and Jayne Sayle, along with chef John, and bar manager Steph, the pub has been turned around these last three



years. As well as a function room, the pub has two regular rooms, one mainly used for dining in an informal setting. High quality food at very competitive prices is available Tuesday to Sunday lunchtimes and evenings (not Sunday evening). The menu is extensive, with specials and smaller portions for children, with a full roast on Sundays, and a steak night offer on Thursdays.

The other room is the cosy traditional bar, which is relaxed and informal. There is a friendly welcome from both sides of the bar to the outsider arriving at the pub in this closely knit community. Okell's Bitter features, alongside an ever changing guest beer. Over a hundred past pump clips decorate the bar areas, as a record of the past guest ales.

Darts is available, with the pub having two ladies darts teams, and there is TV for the sport, though unobtrusive and in the



background. There is a tribute section to the beleaguered but now saved Portsmouth 'Pompey' football club, with a photograph of the FA cup 2008 victory taking pride of place, remembering happier times. Charity fund raising efforts are represented by way of a cheque for several thousand pounds, raised for Clatterbridge

Cancer Charity by the local community. For Merseyside readers, much of the specialist hospital treatment is provided to Isle of Man residents by the Liverpool and Wirral hospitals, hence the fundraising in the local Island communities.

All in all the Grovesnor is a true rural success story and is now a pub with a growing reputation. The commitment of the team and the consistency achieved, has once again made this a Pub is the Hub at the heart of the village.

IOM Pub News

The Waterfall, in Glen Maye remained closed at the end of March, but there are hopeful signs it may reopen soon.

Isle of Man Railways are again running the very popular Rail Ale Steam trains for 2013.

Okell's is going for 100% cask availability in all traditional outlets, with only a couple of pubs left to reintroduce cask as Mersey Ale goes to print.



Sir Norman's Bar, part of the Sefton Hotel next to the Gaiety Theatre in Douglas, now stocks three real ales including two ever changing guests. A popular bar with theatre goers, you can

sit on the front terrace looking over Douglas Bay alongside Sir Norman Wisdom on his bench and enjoy a pint. Well maintained and with uniformed immaculately dressed bar managers and staff providing attentive service, the pricing is competitive for the service and surroundings at £3.00 a pint.

The Bay at Port Erin (a Bushy's flagship pub) has recently appointed Marce Drozdic as manager. Bushy's owner Martin Brunnschweiler who lives upstairs, is planning to spend more time on the brewery side of the operation. The Island had been considering **minimum alcohol unit pricing**, but this is on hold, due to the postponement of similar moves at Westminster.

Angie Andrews - an Appreciation



It is with great sadness that Mersey Ale has to report the passing of Angie Andrews, former Chairman of the Isle of Man CAMRA Branch for many years. During the 2000-2006 periods, when the branch was low on volunteers, Angie held the fort, providing valuable advice to new and incoming members with her extensive knowledge of the Island pub estate.

It was during her tenure that the Isle of Man was awarded the CAMRA National Members Weekend conference held in 2010 at The Villa Marina. This along with the distribution on Island of MerseyAle, was the springboard for much of the IOM Branch's recent success and increase in membership.

Always bubbly and gregarious, nevertheless Angie was a refreshingly no nonsense straight talking Chairman who point blank refused to be called Chair, Chairperson, or Chairlady. At the time as the incoming Branch Secretary, I soon learnt not to present to her a half-baked plan, which she would instantly see through and swot away with aplomb!

Angie passed away suddenly the Saturday before Easter having been still working in The Railway, Union Mills, the fortnight before. She will be sorely missed.

Dave Halliwell

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"

St Helens CAMRA News

St Helens CAMRA Branch produces an email newsletter which is sent to members. The Branch welcomes views on sthelenscamra@hotmail.co.uk The news on this page of MerseyAle is taken from the April/May email newsletter..

The Time is Right for the Clock Face

St Helens CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013

The Clock Face in Prescot has been awarded the title of Pub of the Year by the St. Helens Branch of CAMRA.



The competition was tight and is the culmination of 12 months hard work as only the top 6 rated pubs in the branch area, (as scored on the National Beer Scoring System – see www.beerscoring.org.uk), go forward to be shortlisted. Over the course of the qualifying period we had 959 scores submitted for the St Helens area, and all the shortlisted pubs were scored by at least 5 members, and often many more. The pubs were then scored by interested members according to CAMRA best practice.

Alison Moody, the licensee of The Clock Face, has built a good reputation for both ales and home cooked food, and the pub is renowned for its friendly atmosphere and community focus. Congratulations go to everyone at The Clock for a job well done.



Second place goes to **The Phoenix** in Canal Street a former winner of the top prize.

James and Lorraine are still doing a cracking job in a warm and friendly pub.

Third place goes to another up and coming pub. **The Counting House** has made massive strides in the last 12 months. Mark Gaskell has increased the number of hand pulls to eight and introduced a



much wider ranges of ales, all served in good condition.

Overall these results reflect the improving nature of our area for real ale outlets and the future promises to be bright for quality drinking around our town

Pub of the Year Presentation Night Friday 24th May.

Join us for our annual presentation night recognising all the hard work that goes into making our branch area a great place for a pint.



www.wappingbeers.co.uk

BALTIC FLEET



Baltic Fleet Beers

Liverpool's only Brew Pub - The Home of Wapping Brewery

Award Winning Beers
Winners of Champion Beer of Britain Awards

All your favourites plus our own Wapping Brewery Beers



Stan Shaw,
Wapping's Award Winning Brewer

Food available every day
WE SERVE SCOUSE & LOCAL PIES
(Johnsons Toxteth)

MUSIC SEA SHANTIES
First Saturday of the month QUIZ NIGHT
Every Tues 8pm



10 years
and a Million Pints!

The Baltic Fleet Pub and Brewery, Wapping Liverpool
opposite the ECHO ARENA



SIBA
Society of Independent Brewers Awards Winners (see below)



Peerless Brewing Company Ltd

The Brewery, 8 Pool Street, Birkenhead CH41 3NL

Tel Brewery: 0151 647 7688 Sales: 07840 260 669 Fax: 0151 211 1963
Email: steve.briscoe@peerlessbrewing.co.uk Website: www.peerlessbrewing.co.uk



Peerless All American IPA won Silver in the Strong Bitters class, Storr Lager won Silver in the Bottled Beer class, and the Jinja Ninja won Silver in the Bottled Speciality Beers class and Bronze in the Speciality Beers Cask Ale class.

St Helens CAMRA News contd



Pubs as Spiritual Homes The Brown Edge

My late father said that he could never sum up all the happiness he had from pubs and I am the same. Some pubs become spiritual homes. One which has for me is the Brown Edge Rainhill.

The Brown Edge is walking distance from my home and I was fortunate to start trying the pub soon after Shaun and Gary took over, although the previous landlady certainly made an effort. I remember being stunned by my first pint of Reverend Young's whilst she was running the pub. I have had some of my most enjoyable drinking days there, including watching England winning in Ashes cricket, Christmas night drinking with great Jennings winter brews are amongst them. The new licensee, Adam, is doing a really good job with the beer, and I'm hoping he will have success in this current terribly difficult market.

Des Platt

St Helens Pub News

The Huntsman, Haydock is to become a Tesco. The Huntsman pub is being replaced by a Tesco. Another pub lost to the march of supermarkets taking advantage of planning laws that do not require planning consent to convert a pub into a supermarket.

Bier Palace

Westfield Street's new Real Ale Bar

Think of St Helens and for a lot of people three things come to mind. Greenalls brewery, Beechams pills and the rugby team. The Bier Palace St Helens has two of those ingredients. It is housed in the old Beechams building and it sells beer (though not Greenalls!) The pictures show it in the 1800's and now in 2013. When it was originally converted



from Beechams it became "Courtman's Gentlemen's Outfitters" where the smart dapper gentleman purchased his clothing. It is now a real ale and world beer bar also selling coffees. Bier Palace looks very slick with its leather chairs, wooden floors



and chalk boards. It has almost a continental feel and is airy and light and you can sit by the full length windows that wrap around the building as you watch the world go by. Don't confuse this with being expensive though, as there is a huge 60p discount to CAMRA members on the 6 real ales netting them down



to an amazing £2 per pint whatever the ABV! Julia Carmichael is passionate about real ale. Julia brews in her other more traditional pub **Olde England**, St Helens, which has 7 real ales plus real ciders too. The bar opens at noon daily and for the late birds you can stay till 3am on a Friday and Saturday, 11pm other days. www.bierpalace.com or twitter for the odd and crazy tweet

The Market, Bridge Street. After many years of lying empty the Market has been sold by Star Pubs and Bars (the former Scottish and Newcastle Pub Company). Hopefully now it will return as a pub, but it is not currently known who the buyer is or what their plans are.

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Bringing New People to Real Ale

The SNOWBALL Campaign Rolls On

A major Liverpool CAMRA campaign of the last two years has been the Snowball Campaign which has the aim of Bringing New people to Real Ale, especially women and young people. If real ale is to survive it is vital to introduce new drinkers so as to ensure its longer term future.

The Liverpool Branch Snowball Campaign won the National CAMRA Award for Membership Innovation **Initiatives** - see MerseyAle Spring 2012 edition page 4. 2013 has to date seen two major Snowball events which are reported here;

- The Snowball Preview Event at the Liverpool Beer Festival in February.
- The Snowball Meet the brewer evening in April held in conjunction with the Lion Tavern Moorfields and Mallinson's Brewery of Huddersfield.
- In addition we present a selection of quotes from women new to real ale and why they switched from other drinks.

One - The Snowballs Preview Event at Liverpool Beer Festival

Following on the success of the Beer Festival Preview event we held last year which brought many new people to real ale and generated a considerable increase in CAMRA membership, it was decided to hold a similar event this year. Our target audiences were women and young people



Last year's event

and we drew on those who had started to get involved in CAMRA following last year's event or over the last 12 months. Most of them had been introduced to real ale through friends or family and now we asked them to 'return the



favour', so to speak, and invite their friends or family members who might be similarly 'converted'! **The Snowball Effect!** The setting of the Liverpool Beer Festival, in the beautiful cathedral crypt

with its seemingly endless wall of beer casks, has become very familiar to those who have worked at the festival over many years and also to regular attendees. But for most of us, it never ceases to raise a gasp of delight and appreciation when we return each year.

Imagine, then, what it must be like for people who descend the steps into that beer heaven for the first time! It is, undoubtedly, a whole new experience and one which most people subsequently want to repeat, as witnessed by the fact that many of last year's 'novices' were regular paying ticket goers at other sessions. *Their attendance at the Preview event was intended to introduce the next round of 'novices' to the Festival and the wide range of different beer styles.* The event was scheduled to last just two hours, with a 7.30 start. By 7.35 there were nearly 100 people present! With the Festival not officially starting till the following day, there was only a small selection of cask beers available but this was no problem for those who were clearly excited just to be there. Those of us behind the bar were, however, run off our feet, as everyone busily

exchanged comments about different beers and wanted to sample what their friends were recommending, and tell others what they had enjoyed.

Purple Moose Bottled Beers Guided Tasting

But then there was a new attraction! Purple Moose brewery from Porthmadog in North Wales brought a selection of their bottled beers for a special guided tasting experience. Everyone sampled the beers and was encouraged to think about appearance and aroma as well as taste. Scoring sheets were provided so that people could 'rate' each beer and add comments if they wished.

Snowdonia, a golden beer, and **Dark Side of the Moose**, the clue is in the name, were very popular, but the overall favourite was **Glaslyn** about which one person said:

"It tastes like a summer day" - a lovely thought indeed to turn our thoughts from the cold winter!

Purple Moose beers are now available on draught in several Liverpool pubs - so look out for them, well worth trying as our Beer Festival tasters would say.

By 10pm the place was deserted, with just a few of us helpers left to tidy things up and get ready for the Big Day - the official start of the Festival on the Thursday. But 100 people had gone home very happy! Several sent 'thank you' emails, all indicating that they had had a great night. Comments included;

"We had an amazing time"
"Till tonight my friend had always drunk lager - but she won't be now!"
"I never knew there could be so many different beer flavours"



We hope we'll see them all again and somehow I think we will! Campaigning to introduce people to real ale, to CAMRA and to our great pubs is what it's all about. Jean Pownceby

Two – Snowballs Women's Event

Beer Tasting with Mallinsons Brewery at the Lion Tavern

What better way to celebrate Spring, (or what passed for Spring



during April), than by organising another Bringing New people to Real Ale Snowballs Event at the Lion Tavern with a free beer tasting and talk by women brewers Tara Mallinson and Elaine Youdell of Mallinsons Brewery Huddersfield. The assembled



thirty plus women were the result of the Snowball Method – Come to a Snowball event, tell your friends, encourage them to come with you next time, then get them to tell their friends and encourage them to come along to the event after that and so on.... **That's the Snowball Method for you.**

This was a women's event but there are many mixed Snowball as well, such as the Beer Festival Preview event described above. At the Lion a men's 'crèche' was established in the bar, which had a plentiful supply of real ales

including Mallinsons,, whilst the Snowballs tasting event took place in the lounge.

Lion licensee, Sean, introduced the evening and provided a short summary of the varied history of the pub, which is named after the famous Lion locomotive which ran on the Liverpool to Manchester Railway and appeared in the Titfield Thunderbolt Ealing Comedy film. Lion is now a main exhibit at the new Museum of Liverpool at the Pier Head. Sean also provided and cooked some excellent food for the event, so don't forget to try out the Lion's home cooked lunchtime menu. Elaine and Tara kept the audience riveted with their enthusiasm for brewing and real ale. They described the distinctively different beers they produce and the tastes they were aiming for. Whist listening we tasted **Mallinsons Anna Perenna 4%**, named appropriately after the Roman Goddess of Spring, **Citra 3.8%**, a single hop beer, and **Emley Moor Mild 3.45%**, which was bursting with flavour for a low

gravity beer, which is always a sign of a good brewer! Elaine and Tara are particularly fond of New World hops, which they feel provide a cleaner sharper taste to the beers. "Beers should be refreshing and clear your palate – for us it is about hops." In their view brewing is a simple process but which you can make as complicated as you

want. The brewery water comes from local reservoirs located in an area of peat moorland. An



Tara, Sean and Elaine

additional plus point is that the beers are Vegan and Vegetarian friendly.

The Brewery started in 2008 with Tara brewing and Elaine still a full time teacher waiting impatiently for the business to grow sufficiently for her to join Tara full



time at the brewery. Mallinsons' success has been built on word of mouth rather than hype and advertising. Judging by the reaction from the audience and Lion customers, their fame will certainly spread around Liverpool. Mallinsons beers appear fairly regularly at the Lion, the Dispensary and the Ship and Mitre, so look out for them. In addition the brewery is now producing six hundred bottled beers a week, so Mallinsons can now also be enjoyed at home. When asked if they preferred to



be called brewsters or brewers the reply was "We don't care." The tasting certainly showed that they care very much about the flavour and quality of their beers.

A final significant comment was "Without CAMRA we wouldn't be here."

Three – What Attracted You to Try Real Ale?

Any Bringing New People to Real Ale event is going to generate plenty of conversation and debate, especially when comparing flavours of different styles of beers. The Mallinsons event was no exception. The group spanned the spectrum from those comparatively new to real ale who



Joyce, Clare and Rachel

were the majority, to a few whose appreciation of it stretches back to the early days of CAMRA. In any campaign to Bring New People it is important to discover what attracted people to give real ale a try, why they came to enjoy it and why some had switched away from drinks such as lager and wine.

Claire Waldron has been working in pubs since she was eighteen in addition to her "day job". Despite plenty experience of pulling pints of real ale, she had never tried it until she came to the Snowballs Liverpool Beer Festival event in February – see above. Definitely this was a Road to Damascus moment, there is no stopping her now. "It was a revelation.

I didn't realise there is such a broad spectrum of real ale beers and flavours. So many different exciting tastes" She arrived at the Festival just expecting to mooch about for a while, view the Crypt and possibly try a few beers. Such was the impact the different tastes made on her that

she commented, "it made you want to have a bash at brewing yourself." She said "real ale is like having a meal as well – it's lovely." "Real ale would be my first choice now. I'm proud to say I'm a real ale drinker."

For Claire and her friend Rachel Fisher, discussing and comparing different beers and their tastes is all part of the enjoyable

experience. Rachel was introduced to real ale by her parents, so she has had plenty of time to decide what beers she likes, which is "Anything hoppy and not too strong." She fully intends to assist Claire with her beer investigations into the world of real ale beers and our Liverpool pubs. Yes, it's tough work but, someone has to do

it, Rachel.

Others at the event spoke about the days before CAMRA when the keg beer revolution was in full swing.

"When I was young I drank a lot of beer, but then I stopped because so



many beers were awful. I didn't try beer again for a long time.

CAMRA has been very important and influential in saving real ale and emphasising beer quality and the range of beer styles."

"You tend to develop your own palate as you do with good wine or food. You educate your taste, and CAMRA helps with this."

A common theme was the enjoyment of getting to know what you like and discussing beer with others. More recent beer drinkers mentioned that CAMRA and the Snowball events had given them much more confidence to visit pubs and to ask for real ales. "You get to know what you like and have the confidence to ask for it in a pub. Before I felt a bit intimidated, and felt I didn't know what to ask for. These events have played a large part in building my confidence to ask for real ale in a pub."

Those present enthused about the Mallinsons beers and about CAMRA's part through the Snowballs campaign in making more people aware of real ale and confident to ask for it in a pub. One person expressed it thus;

"We are very fortunate in Liverpool for the range of real ales, the many excellent pubs, the numerous micro breweries and an ever increasing circle of new real ale drinking friends."

Lancashire Cricket, Summer Days and Real Ale Welcome to Worcester Under the Water



Real Ale and cricket have long had an association, and although Lancashire's travelling army of away supporters is these days much depleted, there remains a significant number who 'target' the away grounds where real ale is in plentiful supply in the nearby towns.

Good fortune in the fixture list in 2012 ensured that Lancashire



County Cricket Club was away at Worcester, coinciding neatly with the nearby Worcester CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival. The city itself is home to an excellent mix of cask ale outlets, all set amongst the beautiful surroundings of this ancient city, with the mighty River Severn meandering through the city-literally on occasions in the case of the cricket ground, (which is prone to flooding!), and the nearby racecourse where the beer festival is held. Liverpool CAMRA can confirm the tendency for the race course to flood, having visited the Festival some years ago and found paddling was the most effective way of getting around the extensive riverside site.

Worcester is easily accessible from Lancashire and Merseyside via the much improved West Coast railway line, including the half hourly

London Midland Liverpool to Birmingham service, with a single change at Birmingham New Street.

This article features a report of the 2012 Worcester Festival plus a whistle stop tour through some of the city's premier cask ale outlets.

The 2013 Worcestershire – Lancashire game will be Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th August at Worcester.

A Whistle Stop Tour of Worcester Pubs The Dragon

Arriving by train at Worcester Foregate Street, my first port of call was The Dragon, in the Tything area of the city. Inauspicious looking from the outside, a warm welcome



awaited from the hugely knowledgeable bar staff. The pub specialises in stocking half a dozen guest ales from independent breweries, and on my visit included **Millstone Vale Mill** (3%), **Mighty Oak Gopher Gold** (4.1%) and **The Beach is Back** (5.0%) from Huddersfield's **Mallinson** brewery. The pub has links with Sheffield's Little Cart brewing company and **Little Cart Hurworth** (4%) was also on at the time. With its comfortable tables and button back seating, this



bottled beers, one with a strength as high as 11%.

The Lamb and Flag

Only a few doors up, lies the Lamb and Flag. Although stocking only a couple of ales and more famous for its Guinness, the pub is a must for anyone in the vicinity. With its two rooms, almost unchanged over many years, the unspoilt interior and relaxed atmosphere attracts an eclectic mix of clientele. The pub is popular with artists, poets and musicians, and supports the Worcester Music Festival event. This pub is unique, and is best summed up by an advertising slogan in a local music magazine, "you either get it or you don't!".

Wetherspoon Postal Order

Moving back into town, the local Wetherspoons Postal Order close to the station, is one with an excellent reputation for hosting mini-beer



outlet is a perennial haunt of the travelling real ale cricket fan, and also stocks a large collection of Belgian

festivals supporting local breweries. On this occasion it featured a great range of Woods Shropshire beers, along with full tasting notes, and of course the usual cask ale range. The beer quality could not be faulted.

The Plough

Finally on the east side of the Severn, close to the cathedral, on Fish Street lies The Plough. A grade II listed building, providing a



perfect complement to the Dragon, this pub specialises in stocking a large range of local brews and ciders, which on this occasion included **Hobsons Best** (3.8%), **Weatheroaks St.Udley Mild** (3.4%) and **Malvern Hills Blackpear Bitter** (4.4%), a hoppy and citrusy golden ale and a particular favourite of the writer.

The Picturesque New Road Cricket Ground

New Road, the home of Worcestershire cricket, is found a short distance over the bridge on the West side of the Severn. It is



recognised as one of the most beautiful grounds in the country, set amongst the trees and overlooking Worcester cathedral on the other side of the river. With the cricket on the day being indifferent, and rain imminent, there was nothing for it but to head to the Graeme Hick Pavilion, named after the prolific Worcester batsman. One of the best



cask ale offerings on the whole county circuit is to be found within. The County is sponsored by Marstons, and no less than five real ales were available, including, Pedigree, EPA, Banks, and Brakespear.

The Lunch and Tea Intervals - The Bell

The beauty of county cricket for the cask ale fan is that this civilised game in a hurried world still stops for a forty minute lunch and a twenty minute tea. As such there is just time to nip out of the ground to sample beers from a local hostelry, with many fans over the years having built up a knowledge of the best pubs to head for in the limited time available.

In Worcester's case it is The Bell. Found a quarter of a mile away in St Johns, this award winning several roomed pub dating from the



17th century has a cosy cottage charm, featuring a small back room and outdoor area. Several real ales were found, including **Thwaites Wainwright**, the main sponsor of Lancashire cricket and purely by chance a regular beer at The Bell!

Drawing Stumps - The Worcester Beer Cider and Perry Festival

Finally, to close of play. After a short picturesque walk along the banks of the Severn featuring boats, swans and weeping willows overhanging the river, and then traversing the

Sabrina footbridge, a huge hundred yard long marquee was spotted on the racecourse, venue of the 13th Worcester Beer, Cider, and Perry Festival.

Tickets can be booked online in advance to avoid queuing, and this was done with ease by several Lancashire fans. Once inside, along with the several hundred ales, there was a truly enormous range of ciders and perrys. As a seasoned beer festival follower in the north of



England, where the odd perry is often a token add on to complement a small cider bar, I rapidly decided that it would be a travesty not to take advantage of the range on offer. This being the heart of cider and perry country, knowledgeable advice was on hand to the uninitiated such as myself, not used to such choice. Somewhat unfortunately for the session drinker such as me, third pint measures were not available at Worcester, thus limiting my consumption (with the perries being of such high percentage alcohol strength), inevitably forcing a return visit in future years, at this well organised venue!

All in all Worcester is a superb cask ale city set in beautiful surroundings featuring a fantastic Beer Festival, particularly for cider and perry fans, irrespective of any interest in cricket. A great city for a long weekend, and easily accessible from Merseyside and Lancashire, particularly relaxing via the train.

Finally to the Cricket !

A desperate season for the Red Rose County with Lancashire contriving to be relegated, having been County Champions the year before! Ironically better news for those over the Pennines, where our White Rose

friends, having been relegated themselves when Lancashire won the Championship, won promotion back to the top flight - probably much to their amusement as they witnessed the Lancastrians heading in the other direction!

David Halliwell

County Cricket, Real Ale and Liverpool Aigburth

An Opportunity for 2013

The last two years have seen a bonanza for the Liverpool cricket fan, with up to six Lancashire County Championship games a season being played at Aigburth. This was due to the ongoing rebuilding work going on down the M62 at the Red Corporate Hospitality Box known as Old Trafford cricket ground.

Applauded by all as a "real" cricket venue, Aigburth, with its classic Edwardian pavilion close to the river, provides a friendly welcome to all, not just the corporate suits. The ground is renowned for pitches that give something to both batsmen and bowlers, often leading to a result rather than a draw. Unfortunately in 2012 most of the results were a defeat for Lancashire!

The switch to Aigburth has been warmly welcomed by cricket goers, but regrettably there will be just the one County game there in 2013, Lancashire versus Gloucestershire Wednesday 29th May to Saturday 1st June. There will also be a County game at Southport in 2013, Lancashire versus Hampshire Wednesday 28th to Saturday 31st August.

Real Ale Pavilion but Pity the Day Visitor

Real Ale wise the Aigburth pavilion offers two changing hand pumped real ales which are much



appreciated, (and consumed in volume,) by members. The beers are often from interesting smaller breweries, although Wainwright tends to find a place on the bar during Lancashire matches as Thwaites is a main Lancashire sponsor.

Unfortunately (and unforgivably?), the non member day visitor cricket

fan has to suffer expensive smooth flow John Smith's keg beer and lager in the Beer Tent. What a contrast to the time when the Higson's family was a power at Liverpool Cricket Club and the Beer Tents for County games would offer cask Higsons, thereby bringing cask ale to all spectators, not just the members.

A number of County Cricket grounds find ways of offering real ale to their day visitors rather than just the members. So how about it Aigburth for 2013?

Currently non members are found heading quickly over the road to the Toby Carvery, which usually has a real ale on hand pump, often either Wainwright or Fuller's London Pride. The carvery is also very popular with fans. Another feature of cricket at Aigburth is the convenient transport links into Liverpool City Centre via the 82 bus and Merseyrail from Aigburth station, so at stumps the cricket follower can head rapidly to the many excellent pubs in the Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain.

Another attraction of County Cricket at Liverpool !!

John Armstrong



The cover was done using a Wacom Bamboo drawing tablet and ArtRage Studio Pro on IMac

The Front Cover -

MerseyAle Trumps Cezanne's Cards

The cover is a retake of the famous Cezanne painting 'The Card Players' and has been produced by MerseyAle designer Dennis Jones. The setting is the back room of Peter Kavanagh's, the venue of the March Liverpool CAMRA Get Together - see pages 28 and 29. The focus of attention is MerseyAle rather than the original subject of playing cards depicted by Cezanne. Thanks to Dennis for a great piece of artwork.

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

Diary

Liverpool Branch Get Togethers

Wed 15th May 8pm – Crown in Lime Street (upstairs room) – with Chair's special quiz and prizes!

Wed 22nd May Mild Month Trail Evening – visiting pubs serving Mild. Meet either 6.30pm at Lion Tavern Moorfields, or at Rigby's Dale Street main bar at 7.30pm.

Wed 19th June 8pm – Old Bank in Waterloo (upstairs room) **Meet the Brewer Tasting** – with a chance to 'meet' one of the brewers who regularly supplies beers to the pub, and sample the beers. Old Bank is diagonally left out of Waterloo railway Station on the opposite side of Shore Road – three minutes from station.

Pub Walk "Over the Water" on Sunday 23rd June

Walk along promenade Seacombe to New Brighton visiting Real Ale Pubs **Meet at Mersey Ferry Pier Head for the 12 noon ferry to Seacombe.**
Details email contact@merseycamra.org.uk

Wed 17th July – coach to the Masonic new real ale outlet in Garston departing from outside Ship and Mitre Dale Street – check www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk for times

Wed 21st August – scenic footpath and pubs walk about three miles including visits en route to pubs in Childwall,

Gateacre and Woolton. Meet 6pm at the Childwall Fiveways Wetherspoon

Coach Trips



Coach Trips depart 10am from outside Ship and Mitre Dale Street. Cost £12 members, £15 non members. To book email social@merseycamra.org.uk or phone Ian Macadam 07521 741 586

Saturday 18th May to North Wales Welsh Highland Railway Beer Festival and Porthmadog pubs, plus optional steam train travel.

Saturday 15th June to West Midlands Black Country pubs and brew pubs.

Saturday 13th July to Bishops Castle town Beer Festival six pubs and live music – two coaches running.

Future Coach Trips – for details see www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk
Dates are 10th Aug; 7th Sep; 12th Oct and 16th Nov.

Pub Surveys

31st May. Midi bus trip to survey pubs in South Liverpool. Depart Ship & Mitre 7pm. Fare £5.

Next Edition of MerseyAle

Copy deadline is Monday July 1st. Distribution first week August. email news and articles to merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk



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MerseyAle

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Cost is £100 per half page, £200 full page payment in advance.



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

You Can't Afford NOT to Join CAMRA!

There has never been a better time to join CAMRA, especially if you choose to be in the Liverpool Branch. The benefits of membership will more than recoup your membership fee including;

£20 worth of Wetherspoon beer vouchers

- Free or discounted entry to CAMRA beer festivals
- Discounts on CAMRA books and publications
- Special offers on a range of other products such as holiday cottages
- Members' discounts in a large number of pubs nationwide

- Brewery discounts on beer offers
- Free monthly "What's Brewing" newspaper and the quarterly full colour "Beer" magazine.

PLUS if you opt to join the Liverpool CAMRA Branch you receive further benefits.

- A free Branch coach trip for new members joining the Branch
- Priority booking for the sell out Liverpool Beer Festival
- Reduced ticket price on Branch coach trips, saving £3 for members compared with non members.

Application form page 53 or visit www.camra.org.uk