

MerseyAle

CAMRA LIVERPOOL & DISTRICTS MAGAZINE

FREE
SUMMER 2015

**MerseyAle
Razzle
Dazzles You**



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**



www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

Print Run 11000

THE LION TAVERN

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WEEKLY LOCALE
See Board for future Real Ales



“One of the Hundred Best Pubs in the country”

Daily Telegraph

PUB OF EXCELLENCE 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

OCCASIONAL MEET THE BREWER EVENTS

on third Thursdays of the Month 8pm

POETRY GET TOGETHER

Fourth Thursday of the Month 8pm

V6 Adventure Club

Meet every Wednesday at 8.00pm

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool and Districts Branch

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Liverpool and Districts

CAMRA Branch

www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

www.facebook.com

/CAMRALiverpool

@LiverpoolCAMRA

QR Codes page 54



Isle of Man CAMRA Branch

www.isleofmancamra.org.uk

CAMRA national site

www.camra.org.uk

Cover Artwork by Dennis Jones

Let MerseyAle

Razzle Dazzle You

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

Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle



Just like the Mersey Ferry, Snowdrop, in its new first world war livery designed by artist Peter Blake (of Sergeant Pepper album cover fame), let MerseyAle Razzle Dazzle you with news and opinion on real ale and pub issues locally and nationally.

Pubs of the Year

We bring you the result of the Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year Competition (page 5) plus the contenders for Merseyside Pub of the Year (page 27). There is report of new real ale outlets in our Pub News (pages 15 and 17) and in MerseyAle (page 49). There is a Guide to Locale and Where to Find It in Liverpool on pages 12-13 We bring you a review of the Pen Factory and its Once and Future King six months on from its opening. Has the Sword been pulled from the Stone? (read pages 44-47).

Activating Members

CAMRA is keen to activate new members and a recent survey has shown that 24% of non-active members over 60 are interested in volunteering to assist CAMRA activities, including those who are coming up to retirement. If this is of interest to you then see page 31.

40th Anniversary

This last year has been the 40th Anniversary of the founding of Merseyside CAMRA in the Globe, Cases Street, in Liverpool, and a number of celebratory events have run throughout the year.

We bring the Anniversary to a conclusion by asking one of the Branch Founder Members and former Editor of Mersey Drinker, Ian MacMillan, to offer his personal reflections by Looking Forward and Back over 40 Years of Campaigning and the Challenges for the Future – see pages 6-11

Big Brewers Takeover

We consider how the Big Brewers are moving into the 'craft beer' market with the takeover of Meantime Brewery by SAB Miller, the World's second biggest brewer. We review the latest developments with the proposed Cains Brewery Village development proposal (page 25).

Join Us

CAMRA relies on its members and the contribution they make to its activities. So why not come along to one of the Get Togethers and the new Last Thursday Meet Ups to find out what is happening and to enjoy a real ale evening (see page 54 for the Diary). CAMRA Coach Trips are listed on Page 51 and any new member joining CAMRA and the Liverpool Branch can claim a free coach trip and then as a member will save £3 on the price of any future trips. It pays to join CAMRA!



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

John Armstrong Editor

The EXCELSIOR
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Wednesday Steak Night

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LIVERPOOL PIGEON

14 Endbutt Lane, Crosby, L23 0TR **MicroPub**

Liverpool Pigeon is Merseyside's original micro pub. We opened October 2013 and celebrate the fantastic beers we have in the North-West by showcasing beers around the region and further afield.

- Small single roomed establishment
- Sells real (not fizzy) cider
- No spirits/alco-pops or keg products
- Shuns national or multi-national products
- No tv, juke box or gaming machines
- Conversation as entertainment
- Small range of beer snacks

Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2014 and 2015
www.liverpoolpigeon.co.uk

5 Handpumps

Serving cask conditioned ales

Tues - Fri 4 - 9 Sat 12 - 9 Sun 12 - 5
Closed Monday

Buses: X2, and 47 from Queen Sq L'pool and 54 from Victoria St L'pool

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts

PUB of the YEAR

2014 and 2015

The LIVERPOOL PIGEON

The Pigeon Flies Home First Again

Liverpool Pigeon Wins Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year for Second Year Running

The Liverpool Pigeon Micropub at 14 Endbutt Lane Crosby L23 0TR has won the Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year Award for the second year in succession. Tony Morgan reports on the Award Presentation Event held at the Pigeon.



Wednesday 29th April saw the presentation of **Liverpool & Districts CAMRA Pub of The Year (PoTY) award** which for a second successive year goes to The Liverpool Pigeon in Crosby. CAMRA members joined around 30 customers to celebrate this achievement by Merseyside's first

micropub. The principles behind micropubs are well known and include a commitment to cask beer and real cider and being a focal point for the community. Some micropubs also provide a range of bottled beers and simple snacks.

Before presenting the award Andre Fu, (Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year Competition Co-ordinator), outlined the procedure for choosing the Pub of The Year. CAMRA members nominate pubs for the award. Of those nominations three city centre venues and two suburban ones are shortlisted. A team of judges is assembled, (though no judge knows who their fellow judges are), who then go away to survey the pubs. Andre noted,

"although beer quality is the main factor in choosing the winner each pub is also scored on a number of other criteria." These are:

Atmosphere, style, and décor. How does the pub "feel", is it a nice place to be?

Service and Welcome. Prompt, efficient, and friendly service? Are you treated as a human being, rather than just a source of revenue?

Community Focus. Does the pub feel like it is a vital part of the community? Is there a good mix of customers and do you feel comfortable being there?

Sympathy with CAMRA aims. This

covers general CAMRA principles. Does it support and promote our values? Is cask beer actively promoted?

Good Value. Not just the drinks price but have you had a good experience after investing time and effort seeking out this pub? Would you go again?

Liverpool & Districts CAMRA are happy to say that The Liverpool Pigeon scored highly on all of these criteria and are pleased to present Pat and Jacky Moore, and their staff Paul and Gaz, with the Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year award for 2015. Sonia James-Henry (Chair of Liverpool Branch) said,

"The Liverpool Pigeon is a deserving winner of this award as it clearly conforms to all the selection



points and scored highly over the other pubs nominated."

In reply, Jacky Moore said, "It was a surprise to discover that we had won this award for the second year. We would like to thank all our visitors who have been here this year. The pub has exceeded all our expectations but this is due to Pat and the hard work and dedication he puts in to ensure that the quality of the beer he serves is excellent."

We agree, long may the Pigeon fly!
Tony Morgan

Getting There

Bus - From Queen Square Liverpool X2 and 47 and from Victoria Street 54
Walk - 25 minutes from Waterloo Merseyrail Station

Liverpool Pigeon Opening Hours
Tues-Fri 4-9 Sat 12-9 Sun 12-5
Closed Monday





In January 2014 Liverpool CAMRA celebrated Forty Years of Campaigning since the night of 18th January 1974 when the Merseyside Branch of CAMRA was formed in the back room of the Globe, Cases Street, (then a Higsons pub). In 1974 CAMRA had been formed by four friends who met in Chester en route to a holiday in Ireland and fell to talking about the decline in the standards and taste of British Beer. Forty years on the organisation formed by those four guys is regarded as the most effective consumer organisation in Europe and has a membership of 171,065. Will you be the next to join and take the total membership to 172,000? Various celebratory events have been held by Liverpool CAMRA throughout 2014 – see details at end of this feature. To mark the end of the Forty Year Celebration, MerseyAle (the successor to Mersey Drinker), asked one of the founder members of the Merseyside CAMRA Branch, Ian Macmillan, to offer his personal thoughts on Forty Years of Campaigning for Real Ale and the Challenges for the Future.

FORTY YEARS ON

some reflections on 40 years of Liverpool CAMRA campaigning by Ian Macmillan



FROM LITTLE ACORNS.....

That back room at the Globe is tiny. The sledgehammers were barely still on the ruthless Beeching-inspired demolition of the fine baroque sandstone frontage and magnificent single-span train shed of Cheshire Lines' Liverpool Central (High Level) station – its twin in



Manchester is now the GMex Exhibition Centre, how Liverpool must regret the over hasty demolition - as the few met in 1974 to talk about this new thing "real ale", and maybe more.....

But, less than a year on, hundreds of pubs in Liverpool, Wirral, Southport, South and West Lancs. had been surveyed/visited, assessed, catalogued and measured against an agreed national definition of real ale. This was the sound basis, we thought, on which we could formulate and prosecute with fervour a publicity and education campaign, educating local public and opinion-formers to what was happening, what was at risk, naming and shaming the nasties and spelling out the alternatives.

Our inspiration and directing force for that ground-breaking early research was my great friend Tony Wilson (Molyneux), sadly missed since his too early death in 2004. He became a super "pub-spotter",

visiting personally hundreds of pubs, investigating and sampling their beers. In his little notebooks were recorded copious comments on serving methods, type of pub, room layout, socio-economic clientele mix, food availability etc. with the same meticulous detail as he had applied earlier in life to steam train spotting, plane-spotting, traditional folk music and sea shanties.

Remarkably, ten years earlier Tony and I could have been seen quaffing Higsons, Threlfalls and later Whitbreads interchangeably with Double Diamond when in Liverpool. Or draught Newcastle Exhibition interchangeably with (pint) bottled Newcastle Brown, or Newcastle Amber, when plane-spotting at Woolsington in the North-East, or visiting folk clubs at the Bridge, Newcastle, at Birtley, or at the Lampglass Club by the Miners' Welfare in Ashington. Taste was the thing then: we had little developed knowledge of cask/keg beer differences, gasification, processing and marketing techniques.

I knew I disliked Bents' ales (except for their Red Label Stout) --- I didn't lament when Bass gobbled them up and subsequently closed their Liverpool brewery.



Why should I when I'd already discovered a taste for draught Bass? We did notice those huge beer tankers which had begun to replace the old drays, delivering Whitbread

Tankard and Trophy bitter to Threlfalls pubs, yet somehow it didn't register.



The wake-up call was the discovery that suddenly in the mid-60s we couldn't find any pubs selling our beloved Newcastle Exhibition any more - Scottish and Newcastle Breweries had killed it off and replaced it with something called Starbright, which didn't taste nearly as good. No longer was the Blue Star a shining, guiding light.

Yet only when "four guys and a shoe-box" organised nationally to form CAMRA and grab some media coverage from 1971, did we awaken to the revolutionary slaughter which the "Big Six" brewery conglomerates



had been inflicting on well-loved beers, brewing and pubs everywhere. It quickly became clear that passivity was not an option --- nothing less than an organised fightback was needed.



Our first local pub guide and Jars afterwards

By late 1975 we'd identified 215 "real ale" pubs in the area covered by what was then CAMRA Merseyside 148 in Liverpool postal districts 1 - 25, 16 in Wirral, and the remainder further afield in places like Southport, Ormskirk, St.Helens, Prescot, Huyton and Rainhill, Maghull and Lydiate and the supervening former West and South Lancashire countryside.

What's more, we could prove it, because we'd published, and publicised our research in "JARS", the first Merseyside Guide to Real Ale, 40 pages long and selling for 25p (five bob in old money) in selected pubs, local bookshops and tourist offices. Our local campaign had taken a first tentative step we had our evidence base and - now we needed to build on this, to develop a strategic campaign.

Or to paraphrase Marx, [Introduction to The German Ideology, 1845], having produced a snapshot of the local real ale scene, the point was now to interpret it, then to go political and change it.

The "JARS" picture perhaps appeared somewhat upbeat - it looked like between a quarter and a third of local pubs still sold some sort of real ale, so the label "real ale desert" couldn't apply (unlike the huge chunks of Wales, Scotland, Ulster and many areas in England by now identified by CAMRA in its annual Good Beer Guide and other local guides). You had to dig a little to discover that locally things were far, far worse the choice of real ales was limited to little more than a dozen, supplied by even fewer brewers, via their tied pubs. There were hardly any genuine free houses.

The big brewer Allied/Tetley supplied the only real ale to almost half the real ale pubs we'd identified, with Higsons supplying a further 57 and Greenalls a further thirty - i.e. in 84% of our "real ale" pubs the choice was limited

to only a couple of beers from only three brewers!

Moreover, many districts (Allerton, Childwall, Kirkby, Speke, Netherley, chunks of Aigburth, Bootle, Netherton, Bootle and Sefton, plus vast swathes of the Wirral) were permanently real ale free. Happy you might be then if Tetley (sometimes Walker) or Higsons Bitter, or their less available milds, were your tipples. There were few I knew who swore by (rather than at) the Wilderspool products of Greenalls and fewer still knew that particular brewery added flaked maize and rice flour, as I recollect, to the brewing process. The tasteful Greenalls real ales came from their Wem Brewery in Salop (controlled by the Whitley side of the family) and were always denied to Merseyside (save at our beer festivals), as they were to the large numbers of Greenall pubs in Chester/Cheshire/North Wales.

Evolving, Dynamic, Campaigning: MERSEY DRINKER

However good they are as documents of record telling people where to drink real ale -- local beer guides, without comment and interpretation, have limited value. They are static snapshots needing regular updating, or else they become history. Moreover, their strategic and pedagogic relevance is confined to those likely to buy or read them, though this may be supplemented by media coverage.

84% of our "real ale" pubs the choice was limited to only a couple of beers from only three brewers!



Despite "JARS" running to several editions, each selling a couple of thousand copies or more, we needed a more regular, popular, medium to advance dynamic real ale campaigning.

Our newspaper "MERSEY DRINKER" largely filled that gap.

Real ale pub and brewery news, accompanied by analysis and intelligent commentary, was the staple of each monthly (later bi-monthly) edition. For 5p, rising to 15p by the time I retired as editor in the mid-1980s, you got both local and select national developments, together with pub and brewery history, and explanatory articles on real ale brewing, ingredients, dispense methods. We developed items like the entertaining "Bogbrush" Pub Graffiti Competition, where the sage offered beer prizes each issue for the best graffiti scraped from pub (sometimes train) lavatory walls.



The stress was on building wide audience appeal - we deliberately eschewed cosy self-congratulation (in words and pictures), declined to cover esoteric, non-newsy CAMRA social happenings, and (especially) personalities.

The sham of "editing by committee", or any form of content vetting by local CAMRA apparatchiks was well and truly rejected. We leaned toward free speech, unless defamatory or insulting, and insisted all published material was signed and clearly attributed.



FORTY YEARS ON continued



The earliest (1975) editions of "MERSEY DRINKER" were printed in my attic on my ancient roneo machine. We ran off (with great difficulty !) 1000 copies per issue before the skins began to disintegrate. Since demand was

already outstripping supply, we then moved the printing to Merseyside Aero Enthusiasts' offset -litho facilities at (the old) Speke Airport.

It sold in some 40 pubs and other outlets and circulation had reached approximately 2500 copies by the time I handed over the reins of production. But its influence extended much further than this - we posted regular copies to interested local and national media, as well as to brewers and other opinion-formers, and there was a prepaid subscription list of 50.



Ian Macmillan with current MerseyAle editor John Armstrong



FORTY YEARS ON continued

MORE DYNAMIC CAMPAIGNING: REAL ALE FESTIVALS



Today, real ale festivals are seen as major fundraisers, cash cows even, as well as acting as major alternative social events for the general public. CAMRA itself does them in hundreds, all over Britain, in a multiplicity of different venues - there are often half a dozen to choose from on every week of the year. They come in all different sizes and settings - in parish, village and civic halls; in pubs with outside marquees; in football, cricket and cycling grounds with capacities between 100 and several thousand each session. They're all at it now: social and rugby clubs, round tables, SIBA (the Small Independent Breweries Association), and many individual pubs, breweries and pub groups (e.g. Wetherspoons).

Some very innovative festivals take place simultaneously in groups of linked pubs - witness the highly successful "Bus to the Pub" events, which have become regular fixtures in Lakeland, in West Lancs; in

Denbighshire and Flintshire and in Manchester and Salford - where real ale enthusiasts who are also transport enthusiasts devise and plan pub itineraries, then hire in buses operating to a fixed timetable. En route licensees guarantee to bring in interesting guest beers for the event.

Real ale foodie festivals are now happening in castles (Ludlow). And real ale steam happenings are now common on preserved railways (Severn Valley, East Lancs. Llangollen), or at engine and carriage sheds (Staveley Barrow Hill, Crewe Heritage Centre, Oxenhope). Some enterprising commercial train operators (Northern South-West Trains, First Great Western) have jumped on the bandwagon, enlisting CAMRA support to establish "rail ale trails", whereby groups and individuals use normal timetabled trains to visit real ale pubs in former railway premises on, or adjacent to, their stations.

Beer Festivals as Campaigning – NOT Maximising Profit

All of this is, no doubt, mostly to the good, generating (mostly) positive publicity. But it's a long way from the very specific campaigning focus CAMRA Merseyside envisaged for beer festivals in the mid-1970s. Yes, we did want to bring real ales before a wider public. But, more importantly, we needed to



demonstrate to Merseysiders the range, tastes and contrasts in real beers then unobtainable locally. So, prizewinning Tim Taylors' beers from Keighley took off precisely because they were so different from Teteleys from Dallam. And Greenall Wem ales could be savoured and appreciated alongside their "bog standard" cousins from Wilderspool. Even Bass Charrington nondescripts like Brew Ten from Tadcaster or Brew XI from Cape Hill could be measured against their more tasteful cousins from within the Bass Empire like Springfield Bitter from Wolverhampton, Stones Bitter from Sheffield, or the delicious Highgate Mild from Walsall.

We sought also to bring in beers from breweries who had a unique range - like the splendid Yorkshire Clubs, which boasted seven or eight



bitters, milds and old ales brewed exclusively for the workingmens' clubs, but which was already suffering sales decline because of changed socio-economic mix in their supply area and inability to match the loans offered by the big brewers.



There were others, like Hartleys of Ulverston, the Black Country independents like Simpkins, Bathams, Holdens, Scottish independent Belhaven of Dunbar (now part of Greene King) and the unique Traquair House, personally supervised by the Laird of Traquair from his Innerleithen, Borders home.

We made special efforts to exhibit and sell threatened beers (already only produced in low volume or which might be discontinued after a possible takeover), in the hope that greater public awareness may help to save them.

Liverpool Real Ale Exhibitions

Unlike many beer festivals today, perhaps, our early efforts were certainly NOT aimed at profit maximisation - we weren't even sure they'd generate a surplus at all after meeting overheads, but felt that, within reason, our other campaigning objectives were of greater significance. Indeed, our early festivals weren't styled "festivals" at all, but rather "real ale exhibitions" - we thought the term 'festival' was a bit too ambitious and might prejudice the granting of a licence if it suggested negative

public order considerations. But, in reality, only one (that at Aintree Racecourse) made a small loss, largely because punters were probably put off by the distance and bad weather. All the others I led as Coordinator (Everyman Theatre, University Catholic Chaplaincy (2), Albert Dock, Sandon Dock, University Students' Union, Adelphi Hotel (2), St. George's Hotel made money - indeed, many were sellouts, though we never ran out of beer!

Looking back, one would have loved to have had just a few more small brewers like Oakham, Thornbridge, Hawkshead, Ossett, Roosters, Elland or Fernandes to choose from - not to mention all the wonderful new American, NZ, Slovenian and other hop varieties which have enabled the greatly increased diversity of today's brews. However, I'm proud we enabled a few thousand people to sample on Merseyside, via our beer festivals, the fine beers of those many brewers no longer with us.



Looking back and looking forward CAMRA Books

This is surely one of the real ale movement's most resounding successes. In the 1970s I recall meeting after meeting at regional and national level where it was debated whether there would ever be enough material beyond the requirements for the national Good Beer Guide (established 1974) to enable CAMRA to publish anything else - especially after the sales flop of Real Ale on the Waterways (heavily remaindered, despite it being a splendid well-designed and well-illustrated book).



How pleasing then that, forty years on, not only does the national guide still go from strength-to-strength, but CAMRA Books, as an in-house publishing subsidiary, has by now hundreds of fine books to its credit, ranging from local guides, to pub walks, to European and USA guides, and including the best-selling 300 Beers to Try Before You Die! And all this is largely down to genial guru (and stickler for detail) Roger Protz, supported by a fine cast of expert writers and editors. Who would have thought in the 1970s that a former editor (and occasional streetseller at rallies, if I recall) of Socialist Worker would end-up producing such collective goodies for the cause of real ale?



I can't wait for Roger's latest book, Britain's Beer Revolution (geddit?), where he conducts an in-depth probe of changing style preferences of real ale brewers and public, examining the IPA, porter and stout



resurgence among others. Maybe we should kill off that dreadful coffee-table pile of self-serving waffle, CAMRA's 'Beer' magazine, so that we can publish even more worthwhile books?

The Wetherspoon Voucher Offer



At one of those recent gatherings of CAMRA grandees, which the politically correct call The CAMRA Pioneers (but others refer to, less politely, as t'owl farts!), one major conversational topic was the current membership total - now 171,000 odd and rising, I believe, the reasons why, and what implications there might be for CAMRA if it suddenly started to decline in these austere times.

Someone argued the major push factor for the exponential rise of CAMRA joiners would likely be found not unadjacent to the Wetherspoon freebie voucher offer, worth £20 when you joined - or over 80% of the £24 membership fee. So what would be the effect, another wag asked, if JDW were suddenly to withdraw from their offer? At a time when the number of St. Albans HQ staff has never been higher (north of 45, at the last count), how might they be affected? It makes you think, doesn't it?

What Pub? – A Landmark Success

Another landmark success story today is surely the superb, and long-anticipated, What Pub? database website. It now has such good coverage and such growing detail as to almost render local beer guides redundant. But why do so many local CAMRA branches fail to record the ownership of pubs, when that



detail alone can make such a difference when planning itineraries. And why are the public transport notes so shabby, and walking routes from bus stops hardly ever given?

As West Pennines Regional Organiser in the mid-70s I spent much time haggling over CAMRA branch boundaries and trying to amicably resolve disputes. There was some excuse back then since branch boundaries hadn't been firmed up in many parts of the nation and there were some new branches being formed. Not so today.

Now news has reached me of an almighty "tinkering" proposed for Greater Manchester, in which the well-respected and long-established North Manchester Branch - which has covered a sizeable chunk of central Manchester, alongside most of Salford, for donkey's years - looks set to be all but 'rationalised' out of existence. It would indeed be

unusual if CAMRA didn't have a few jobsworths lurking below the surface, but there's surely a principle of common sense here - we're supposed to be about beer campaigning, not territorial swaps i.e. if it works already, don't try fixing it. It almost reminds me of the bedroom tax. Ugh!

Finally - A Personal Regret

One of my greatest regrets after 40 years in CAMRA, at all levels, is to find some branches still trying to charge CAMRA members an entry fee to their beer festivals. This is usually unnecessary, not to mention highly morally dubious, There used to be an unofficial understanding that the membership fee covered local beer festivals, though obviously not national ones, especially as everyone must pay for their beer anyway.

*Ian MacMillan
A Founder Member of Merseyside CAMRA in 1974 and long time Editor of Mersey Drinker*

Celebrations for 40 Years of Liverpool CAMRA Campaigning

Read about the Celebration Events on line in MerseyAle back issues on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk
Spring 2014 edition – 'Liverpool CAMRA Celebrates 40 Years of Success Fighting for Real Ale' – pages 9 to 15
Summer 2014 edition – Special 40th Anniversary Event – 'Bob Thurlow Goes "Inn Liverpool" – pages 11 to 12
Winter 2014 edition – 'Memories of CAMRA in the 70s' – pages 46 and 47



- What Is It and Where Can You Find It?

CAMRA LocAle is an initiative that promotes pubs stocking locally brewed real ale. The scheme builds on a growing consumer demand for quality local produce and an increased awareness of 'green' issues.

The LocAle scheme was created by the Nottingham Branch in 2007. The catalyst was the buy out and subsequent closure of Hardy & Hansons by Greene King. They then started brewing various H&H beers at Bury St. Edmunds and transporting it all the way back to Nottingham. This led to thinking about the miles that the beer was travelling. Hence, the phrase, "Beer Miles," was coined.

To be LocAle accredited, a pub should stock at least one real ale, brewed at a brewery no more than 30 miles from door-to-door via the shortest road route (this may vary in other CAMRA branch areas) and the ale must have a locale identity. Therefore, we would not expect an ale that is associated with London to be LocAle in Liverpool, even if it's contract-brewed locally. Encouraging pubs to sell local beer reduces the "beer miles" thus benefiting the environment.

- It ensures more variety and diversity to the consumer and, hence, better sales for the pub.
- It helps sustain the local micro brewers.
- It benefits the local economy. Though initially the scheme was

only in the Nottingham area, it has subsequently been rolled out nationally, more and more branches have now signed up and it has been re-branded to CAMRA LocAle.

The Liverpool & Districts branch currently has over 45 pubs signed up to the scheme. You will find that participating pubs will display appropriate stickers in windows and doors, visible from outside. Before displaying any CAMRA LocAle publicity material, a pub must be awarded accreditation by the CAMRA Branch via the LocAle Co-ordinator. Accreditation is at the sole discretion of the Branch and subject to the licensee agreeing to the following:

- The award applies for the current year only, so, if a licensee gets the award in 2015, they have to be re-accredited to get the award in 2016.
- That they will endeavour to ensure at least one locally brewed real ale, as defined by the local CAMRA branch, is on sale regularly (though exception can be made if, on random checks, the pub has been exceptionally busy and the LocAle beer is not ready to serve or if the pub is running a beer festival).
- Only real ale, as defined by CAMRA, can be promoted as a CAMRA LocAle.
- Most importantly, the beer must be consistently served in good condition.

■ That accreditation can be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the local CAMRA Branch.

■ That should accreditation be withdrawn, or should the licensee withdraw from the scheme, all publicity material must be removed from the pub and the licensee must cease using the CAMRA LocAle logo.

Once satisfied that the pub meets the above criteria, I will provide posters, window stickers, leaflets and pump clip toppers as well as listing the pub on the LocAle page on the Branch website www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk, which shows all the LocAle pubs in our area. Pubs can also elect to have a dedicated LocAle certificate produced specifically for them at no cost.

So if you are a licensee who can satisfy our LocAle 2015 criteria, then please contact me via locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk or, if you drink in a pub which you think would also qualify, please bring this article to the licensee's attention.

*André Fu
Liverpool & Districts CAMRA
LocAle Co-ordinator*

Where to Find LocAle in Liverpool

Abbey, 85-89 Hanover Street, L1 3DZ

Baltic Fleet, 33 Wapping, L1 8DQ

Barkers Brewery, Archway Road, Huyton, L36 9UJ

Belvedere, 8 Sugnall Street, L7 7EB

Bier, 52 Lark Lane, Aigburth, L17 8UU

Blackburne Pub & Eatery, 24 Catharine Street, L8 7NL

Blues Bar, 21-23 Moor Lane, Crosby, L23 2SE

Bridewell, 1 Campbell Square, L1 5FB

Caledonia, 22 Caledonia Street, L7 7DX

Cat & Fiddle, St Martin's House, Bootle, L20 3LG

Cavern Pub, 5 Mathew Street, L2 6RE

Childwall Fiveways, 179 Queens Drive, L15 6XS

Clove Hitch, 23 Hope Street, L1 9BQ

Cobden, 89 Quarry Street, Woolton, L25 6HA

Cross Keys, 13 Earle Street, L3 9NS

Dispensary, 87 Renshaw St, L1 2SP

Elephant, 1 Woolton Street, Woolton, L25 5NH

Excelsior, 121-123 Dale Street, L2 2JH

Fall Well, Roe Street, L1 1LS

Flanagan's Apple, Mathew Street, L2 6RE

Flute, 35 Hardman Street, L1 9AS

Font, Unit 3, Arrad Street, L7 7JE

Frank Hornby, 38 Eastway, Maghull, L31 6BR

Gardeners Arms, 101 Vale Road, Woolton, L25 7RW

Gold Balance, 6-10 Newton Gardens, Kirkby, L32 8RR

Grapes, 60 Roscoe Street, L1 9DW

Hope & Anchor, Maryland Street, L1 9DE

Hub, 16 Hanover Street, L1 4AA

James Monro, 69 Tithebarn Street, L2 2EN

Jawbone Tavern, 12 Litherland Road, Bootle, L20 3BZ

Lime Kiln, Fleet Street, L1 4NR

Lion Tavern, 67 Moorfields, L2 2BP

Liver, 137 South Road, Waterloo, L22 0LT

Liverpool Pigeon, 14 Endbutt Lane, Crosby, L23 0TR

Masonic, 35 Gladstone Road, Garston, L19 1RR

Merton Inn, 42 Merton Road, Bootle, L20 3BW

Navigator, 694 Queens Drive, Old Swan, L13 5UH

Old Bank, 34 South Road, Waterloo, L22 5PE

Pen Factory, 13 Hope Street, L1 9BQ

Philharmonic Dining Rooms, 36 Hope Street, L1 9BX

Pumphouse, The Colonnades, Albert Dock, L3 4AN

Queen's PictureHouse, 47 South Rd, Waterloo, L22 5PE

Raven, 72-74 Walton Vale, Walton, L9 2BU

Rhubarb, 27-29 Lark Lane, Aigburth, L17 8UW

Richard John Blackler, 1-2, Charlotte Row, L1 1HU

Richmond Pub & Hotel, 32 Williamson Street, L1 1EB

Richmond Tavern, 23a Church Rd, Wavertree, L15 9EA

Scotch Piper, Southport Road, Lydiate, L31 4HD

Sefton Arms, 1 Mill Lane, West Derby, L12 7HX

Ship & Mitre, 133 Dale Street, L2 2JH

Sphinx, 160 Mount Pleasant, University, L3 5TR

Stamps Bar, 5 Crown Buildings, Crosby, L23 5SR

Stamps Too, 99 South Road, Waterloo, L22 0LR

Thomas Frost, 77-187 Walton Road, Kirkdale, L4 4AJ

Vernon Arms, 69 Dale Street, L2 2HJ

Victoria Cross, 1-3 Sir Thomas Street, L1 6BW

Volunteer Canteen, 45 East Street, Waterloo, L22 8QR

Welkin, 7 Whitechapel, L1 6DS

White Horse, 2 Acrefield Road, Woolton, L25 5JL

Willowbank, 329 Smithdown Road, Wavertree, L15 3JA

Yates's, 1 Queens Square, L1 1RH

Ye Hole in Ye Wall, 4 Hackins Hey, L2 2AW



Are you aged 18-30 and enjoy real ale?

Liverpool Campaign for Real Ale is looking for a volunteer to take on the role of young members' contact. This is an exciting opportunity to help organise events to encourage more young members to be involved in the campaign and, in turn, to help shape the future of the branch and the wider campaign.

The only criterion is that you must be a CAMRA member. For further information please contact Sonia James-Henry, Chair of Liverpool CAMRA chair@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

CAMRA
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MerseyAle PUB NEWS

New Real Ale Outlets Liverpool City Centre

At the refurbished **Liverpool Guild of Students** at the top of Brownlow



Hill close to the Augustus John, the **Sphinx bar** is selling real ale. House beer is **Sphinx**, a 4.3% blonde beer, brewed by **Melwood**. A second pump serves a guest beer, usually either another Melwood beer, or one from the Marstons Group. Hopefully this will encourage the students to start drinking cask ale.

The new **Wetherspoon** pub at Lime Street station is to be appropriately called the **North Western**, the same as the hotel of the same name that originally occupied the building. A lot of work is needed to convert the listed building to the company's standards. It was due to open at the end of June, but the latest date is reported as 7th July. I hear a further city centre Wetherspoon outlet could follow.

Hand pumps have been fitted in the bar at the **Philharmonic Hall**. Beer is supplied by **Liverpool Organic**. I have been told that because there is



not a suitable cellar for the beer to be conditioned at the Hall, it comes pre-conditioned from the brewery. This means that demand could outstrip the limited supply. Bottles

are available should the draught run out. The bar is open to the public whenever the Hall is open. It closes at 5.30pm on evenings when there is not a performance.

Another new outlet for real ale is the **Hope & Anchor** on Maryland Street, basically behind its sister pub, the **Flute** on Hardman Street. Six craft keg fonts have been joined by three hand pumps. Like its neighbour a mix of national brands and locales will be served. A sheltered courtyard to the rear will



be a good place to sup ale when the weather is warmer.

Liverpool City Centre

Bier on Newington, like its sister pub on Lark Lane, is now regularly selling beers from **Liverpool Craft Brewery**, a welcome addition to the range of beers.

The Clove Hitch on Hope Street has had some new beer lines fitted, so the beers on at the upstairs bar need not now be the same as those downstairs in the **23 club**.

The former **Black Horse & Rainbow** brew pub on Berry Street that became the Metropolitan for a period, reopened in March as the **Red Door** after being closed for a number of years. Unfortunately there is no sign of real ale.

No real ale was available at the **Everyman Bistro** on my recent visits despite the four hand pumps on the bar. One real ale, the **Everyman Ale**, does sometimes appear when a play is on in the Theatre. I have not seen **Sals** on Renshaw Street open since the New Year.

Crosby and Waterloo

Blues Bar, on the pedestrian area of Moor Lane in Crosby is serving guest ales, often supplied by **Liverpool Craft** and other small breweries.

The Marine, at the river end of South Road in Waterloo, has been rebranded as a **Champs Sports Bar & Grill**, and is as it says on the tin. Real ale is available, though, usually supplied by **Liverpool Organic**.

South Liverpool

Que Pasa Cantania on Lark Lane is now serving beers from different breweries rather than just those from Liverpool Organic. Beers from smaller breweries across the North West and North Wales have featured. There is normally only one beer on at a time. At the beginning of May Love Lane from **Liverpool Craft** was available.

On the same day **Bier** Lark Lane had Liverpool Craft's new wheat beer,



Fox Cub, available. **RhuBARb** also featured a Liverpool Craft beer, this time **Quokka**. Three lovely pints from one of our local breweries.

A Stonegate pub, well used by students, is the **Brookhouse** on Smithdown Road in Wavertree. Unfortunately real ale has not been available here on my recent visits.

The Masonic in Garston is often having beers supplied by **Liverpool Organic Brewery**. As LOB do beer swaps, you will often find beers from many other breweries are also available.



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CAMRA Liverpool & Districts PUB of the YEAR 2012



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Tuesday night after quiz

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

Winner of many awards and one of only SEVEN pubs to feature in every edition of the Good Beer Guide. Over 40 years of Good Beer Guide entries!

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MerseyAle PUB NEWS



The Elephant Pub & Bakehouse in Woolton has been featuring beers from Mad Hatter brewery during March and April. Look out for similar features in the future.

The Argosy, airside on level three



at Liverpool Airport has closed at the end of its lease. The other outlet downstairs on level two, Wetherspoon Express, remains open and is to be expanded. Hopefully this will allow for the provision of cask ale. Previously pre-conditioned bright beer specially supplied by George Wright has been sold here.

Other Areas

The Brunel towards the west end of Breck Road has closed. This pub served real ale for a period recently, but sales proved disappointing. The licensee is reported to have moved to the George further along the road, at the junction with Oakfield Road. Perhaps a larger pub could support real ale.

Not far away, the Oakfield, has reopened after being closed for a few years. Unfortunately, this former Walker's pub, did not have hand pumps on its first match day.

The Picture Drome on Kensington has had some beers from smaller breweries again recently. The prices are on par with those charged when the pub was a Wetherspoon outlet, but the largest discounts are only on pints.

The Fairfield Arms on Prescot Road, which had been listed on

What Pub as serving real ale, has now closed.

CAMRA Member Discounts

The Lion Tavern, Moorfields, has withdrawn its 10 pence a pint CAMRA discount due to misuse by some customers.

The Abbey on Hanover Street is the only Merseyside outlet for Parity Bars. The pub continues to offer a good variety of beers, with a good discount for CAMRA members, which is clearly advertised inside and out.



Pub News by Tony Williams

Beer Scoring

Beer scoring has never been so easy. For a pub to appear in the Good Beer Guide (GBG) there is a need for it to be well scored regularly by a number of different CAMRA members. If you have a computer or smart phone you can connect to www.whatpub.com. Once logged in via your membership number and your postcode without the gap as the password, you remain logged in on your device, so you do not have to log back in the next time.

Once on the website it is easy to search for the pub by starting to type in the name. An outlet such as the Kazimier appears after you have typed K.A.Z. For a more common name such as the Crown you would have to add the place as well. Alternatively, you can enter part of the postcode, with 'L17'

bringing up all the pubs in the Aigburth area. Using a portable device you can put in the score while you are actually drinking the beer. On some devices there is an 'nearby pubs' icon in the top right corner and all the pubs in the area will be listed for you to select the pub you are in.

On the desktop version of the site the scoring box is on the right and on the mobile version you select the beer scoring tab. Select a score using the drop down list from 0 (no real ale) to 5 (perfect). Most scores are likely to be between 2 (average) and 4 (very good). If you wish you can add the name of the brewery and the beer. Just typing the first three letters in the brewery box usually brings up the brewery for you to select. When you then click in the beer box, a drop down listing all that brewery's regular beers will appear for selection.



The more people who score, the better the system is. In the past some pubs, especially those away from the city centre, have not made it into the GBG as not enough different people submitted scores. If you have not taken part before, please become a scorer to ensure no pub misses out in the future.



The Belvedere

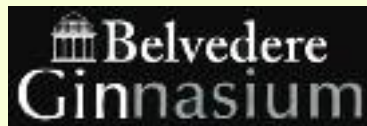
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MerseyAle Cider News



Four Out of Five British Cider Makers Under Threat Due to EU Tax Change

MerseyAle was one of the first publications to bring news that the European Commission was intending to introduce duty changes that were likely to lead to the closure of four out of five small cider and perry producers in Britain. The Spring 2015 edition reported on pages 21 and 23 that; 'At the beginning of March the European Commission demanded that the British government do away with a duty exemption worth £2,500 to small-scale producers of cider

the EU's demand that a new tax of up to £2,700 is imposed on very small cider producers.

The European Union (EU) is proposing to ban the UK's small cider producer duty exemption. This exemption supports very small cider makers, such as hobbyists or farm-gate producers, for whom such small scale production is an integral part of rural culture.

The proposed action would see very small cider producers landed with a tax bill of up to £2,700 each and every year.

We call on the Government to reject the EU's request and put UK cider producers and consumers first.

**Sign the Petition today at –
<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/protect-small-cider-producers-1>**



and perry. Under the exemption, introduced in 1976, cider-makers who produce fewer than 70 hectolitres a year – about 12,000 pints – do not have to pay duty. The National Association of Cider Makers calculates that this accounts for about 80% of the UK's 480 cider-makers.'

We also urged you to sign the online petition launched by 38 Degrees and the CAMRA National Cider Co-ordinator, Angela Briers.

We are pleased to say that the petition has taken off, already achieving 20,316 signatories with a target of 25,000. So please sign the petition today and help reach the target of 25,000, in the campaign to save the small producers. The petition says;

To: The Chancellor of the Exchequer, HM Treasury

We call on the UK Government to continue to support the cider sector and consumer choice by rejecting

White Jersey was described by judges as being 'fruity' and 'easy drinking', with 'a slight sweetness balanced by an excellent tang', and having 'balance without too much acidity'. Janet's Jungle Juice was described as having a 'mature and woody aroma' with 'an initial



sweetness and a smooth finish', and a 'full mouthfeel with a resinous aroma'.

The winner of the Perry Gold medal was Two Trees Perry by Gwynt y Ddraig (meaning 'dragon's breath' in Welsh) which the judges described as being 'initially sweet with a refreshing, dry aftertaste', 'complex yet well balanced, with a

Cider Champions 2015

From Orgasmic Cider, to Janet's Jungle Juice and Dragon's Breath: CAMRA Names the UK's Best Ciders and Perries

CAMRA announced the winners of its National Cider and Perry Championships at the Reading Beer and Cider Festival. The Winners were;
Cider

GOLD (joint) – White Jersey, Orgasmic Cider Company

GOLD (joint) – Janet's Jungle Juice, West Croft

BRONZE – Medium, Three Cats

Perry

GOLD – Two Trees Perry, Gwynt y Ddraig

SILVER – Snowy Owl, Raglan Cider Mill

BRONZE – Perry, Snails Bank

The joint winners of the Cider Gold medal were; **White Jersey by Orgasmic and Janet's Jungle Juice by West Croft.**



poached pear flavour and aroma' with a 'slowly developing finish'.

The competition featured ciders and perries from across the UK, with each cider and perry judged on its individual taste, aroma, flavour, after-taste and overall appeal. The top awards were selected by a specially chosen panel of experienced judges, drinks writers and CAMRA members.

Steve Layton of Orgasmic Cider Company, had this to say on hearing his cider had taken the top spot, "We're very proud of this single blend [variety] cider - we grow the apples, we produce the cider, we do everything - so to me this is a great achievement, as it lets me know our

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 11am -11pm.
Sunday 12-10.30
Telephone 0151 707 0067



5 Handpumps

17 CASES STREET L11HW



CAMRA Merseyside's inaugural meeting took place here over 40 years ago in 1974



MerseyAle Cider News contd

cider is enjoyable to drink by everybody on this top judging panel. We're very proud to win and this is a massive achievement.



Andrea Briers, CAMRA National Cider and Perry Committee Chairman, commented on the quality and diversity of entries: "The quality and variety of real cider and perry is increasing year-on-year, making our job as judges

increasingly difficult. With a set of truly excellent drinks available this year at the festival, and a competition which was very tight right until the final judging we are confident these ciders and perries can truly be known as the best in Britain."

Reading CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival served over 550 beers, plus 150 ciders and perries (from over 100 producers), plus a selection of foreign beers, English wines and mead.

'Real cider' is a term used to describe traditional cider made from freshly pressed apples. Served still rather than force carbonated, real cider is unpasteurised and unfiltered to produce a truly natural and delicious alcoholic drink.



CAMRA Celebrates 27 Years of Campaigning for Real Cider and Perry

2015 will see CAMRA celebrating its 27 record of promoting real cider and perry, thereby saving a British national drink from what looked like the threat of extinction as the large cider producers aggressively marketed national brands made from concentrates and with added carbonation. Watch out for Celebration events and the October Cider Month campaign.

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Rosie's Wicked Wasp - Medium Sweetness Cider Bottled or Draught
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Rosie's Perfect Pear Perry Medium Sweet Perry Bottled or Draught
6.0% abv



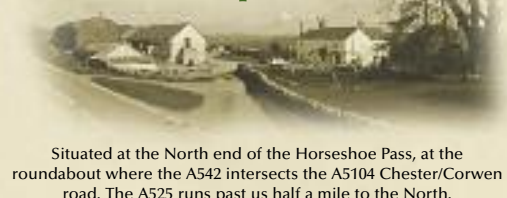
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Rosie's DM4 Cider (not Cidre)

Available lightly carbonated in 500ml bottles, medium or sweet.
6.0% abv

Rosie's Triple D Cider



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Available for Pubs, (Bags in Boxes) and Shops/Delis (Bottled Cider Range)
You are welcome to call at the farm to taste and buy our Ciders and Perry



MerseyAle ADVERTISING

If you wish to place an advertisement you should contact us by email at; adverts@liverpoolcamra.org.uk you can send in your advert design and copy by attachment, or ask us about design.

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

MerseyAle has a print run of 11,000 copies circulation estimated at 40,000. It is an ideal and cost efficient way of keeping your pub and its events in the pubgoers mind (advertising is business expense). Whether it's your choice of real ales, your food, your prices or your social scene like quiz nights, beer festivals, sports TV, and pub games - let people know you are there.

MerseyAle has an experienced graphic designer who can produce you an excellent ad if you can't produce your own (the artwork design is free - you only pay for the page space. See left)

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MerseyAle Brewery news

Big Brewers Move to Take Over Craft Beer

Meantime Brewery Sells to World's Second Biggest Brewer



Meantime IPA, London Lager, London Pale Ale and London Porter. It was founded in 1999 by brewer Alastair Hook in a flat in Greenwich and now operates from a modern 120,000 hectolitre brewery in Greenwich and operates two pubs, the Greenwich Union and the Old Brewery bar. Meantime

Chicago's beloved brewery, Goose Island, was bought by Anheuser-Busch which owns Bud, for \$38.8m (£24.6m) and in 2013 Boulevard Brewing was sold to Belgium-based brewery Duvel Moorgat, prompting fans of the Kansas-based brewery to launch a passionate (but ultimately fruitless) social media campaign. In Britain brewers such as Greene King and Thwaites have launched 'craft beer' ranges.

Craft beer is attractive to the big brewers because it has established a premium price level with high profit margins. Prices are considerably higher than for real ales. The combination of high profit margins and a rapidly growing market is attracting the big brewers.



As many commentators, including MerseyAle, predicted, the big brewers are moving rapidly into the expanding Craft Beer market. The latest move sees craft brewer Meantime of Greenwich London selling to SAB Miller, the world's second biggest brewer, for an undisclosed sum.

SAB Miller, a merger of South African Breweries and Miller of the USA, has 150 different beer brands worldwide, including Fosters, Peroni, Miller Lite, Castle Lager and Pilsner Urquell. Meantime is one of the leading craft brewers in Britain producing beers such as



increased production by 58% last year as demand for craft beers increased. In comparison the overall UK beer market grew by 1% in 2014. It is clear why the big brewers are keen to muscle in on craft beer.

Craft beer is becoming big business, which means the big brewers want a piece of the action. In the United States the home of the craft beer boom, several respected micro-breweries have been bought-out in recent years. In 2011



The takeovers also expose the fundamental problem that there is no agreed definition of 'craft beer' and thus it is virtually

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Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2010 and 2011



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Good Beer Guide singles out **“the landlord’s impeccable attention to beer quality”.**

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

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(Formerly The Grapes) 0151 709 2160



MerseyAle Brewery news contd

impossible to rule out anyone who claims to be producing a craft beer. In the USA the Brewers’ Association defines a craft brewer as one that is small, independent and traditional, but the wave of takeovers of established craft brewers by big brewers is making that an increasingly hard line to hold. The boss of London’s Meantime Brewing Company has defended the independent beer maker’s decision to sell out to SAB Miller. Nick Miller, Meantime’s chief executive, said the craft tag was increasingly redundant and that selling to the world’s second-biggest brewer would not harm the company’s reputation, built up over 16 years as a standalone producer.

“I think the term ‘craft’ will disappear. It will become the norm that we have craft beer whether the brewer is big or small. If you stay true to what you believe in, which is high quality premium beers... I think the drinker will welcome that.” While Meantime is one of the first craft brewers in Britain to lose its independence, it almost certainly won’t be the last.

and bar (see MerseyAle Spring 2013 pages 12 and 13) could have been called in for examination by the Secretary of State for Local Government because of its scale. But the government has decided there is no need for the Planning Inspectorate to assess the scheme.

The 60,000 sq ft complex could in theory be completed by summer 2016, but Cains have yet to find partners for the development and the necessary finance for the scheme.

Liverpool City Council had previously granted planning permission on condition that a craft beer brewery plant be installed and up and running before the rest of the £50 million development could go ahead. Cains closed its Stanhope Street Brewery and had announced an intention to build a small craft brewery on the site which would

concentrate on craft beers and lager production for sale in the UK and export to countries including the USA, Sweden, Italy, China and Taiwan. Cains went on record that they intended to open the craft brewery in time for the International Festival of Business which took place in June last year (MerseyAle Autumn 2014 page 43 and Winter 2014 page 25), but the brewery has still not materialised.

CAMRA member Dave Jones objected to the planning permission on the grounds that Liverpool City Council had waived an expected contribution of £800,000 from Cains in Section 106 Planning Gain and had accepted just £400,000 compared with the £1.2 million initially estimated. Dave claimed this was an unwarranted £800,000 subsidy to Cains (see MerseyAle Spring 2014 pages 21 to 23).



No Government Planning Inquiry into Cains Brewery Village Development Proposal

The government has decided not to hold a public inquiry into the planned £50 million Cains Brewery Village.

The bid to create a craft brewery along with apartments, a boutique hotel, market, cinema

Ye Cracke

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Known locally as the AJ, the Augustus John is a CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed pub set in the heart of campus, behind Blackwell's bookshop on Brownlow Hill. A warm welcome is offered to students; university staff and anybody else lucky enough to stumble upon us. As many will testify, a night in the AJ is an education in itself!

5 ROTATING CASK ALES

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- Liverpool and District Branch CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2012/2013
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The AJ

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Wednesday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Thursday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Friday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Saturday 12.00 noon - 11.00pm
Sunday Occasional

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Pubs of the Year 2015

CAMRA Merseyside Region

CAMRA Branches across the Merseyside region have been judging and awarding Pub of the Year Awards for their Branch pubs. The results for each Branch are given below. The winners will then go forward for judging as the overall Merseyside Region CAMRA Pub of the Year. For the last two years the Regional Winner has been the Freshfield. Will they make it a hat trick in 2016? Judging is underway now and the results will be printed in the next edition of MerseyAle.

Liverpool and Districts CAMRA Branch

The Winner is **The Liverpool Pigeon**

(see separate article).

The Runners Up and awarded Pubs of Excellence and listed in no particular order are;

The Lime Kiln (City Centre); **Pi** (Mossley Hill); **The Ship & Mitre** (City Centre); and the **Dispensary** (City Centre)

Wirral CAMRA Branch

The Winner is **Gallaghers** in Birkenhead.

The three other pubs in the final judging were all highly commended by the judging panel -

they were the **Stage Door Tap at the Queen's Royal** (New Brighton); the **West Kirby Spitting Feathers Tap** and the **Harp** in Little Neston.

Southport CAMRA Branch

The Winner is **The Freshfield** in Freshfield

St Helens CAMRA Branch

The Winner is the **Cricketers Arms**

St Helens Town Centre

Runner Up **The Turk's Head** St Helens Town Centre
Third Place **The Phoenix** St Helens Town Centre

St Helens CAMRA Branch has also been Judging for their Cider Pub of the Year

A panel of cider experts have visited and graded the pubs selling real cider

The Winner of Cider Pub of the Year is;

The Cricketers Arms, St Helens Town Centre

Runner Up - **The Junction**, Rainford

Third - **The Glasshouse**, St Helens Town Centre





In the Spring 2015 edition of MerseyAle, the Editor introduced you to Angus Morrison, the new brewer at Wapping Brewery. Angus took over the brewer's mantle from Stan 'the Man' Shaw in April 2014, having spent twelve months with Stan and learning the brewing ropes. The first article described his journey from life in Seilebost on Harris in the Outer Hebrides to the subterranean brewery under the Baltic Fleet, a progress driven by Angus's passion for producing quality food and drink, especially beer. You can always tell when brewing is underway as the 'periscope' chimney rises from the depths to poke above the pavement. In this second part of the interview, the Editor reports on Angus's future plans for the Wapping beers and the brewery.

UP Periscope!

CONTINUED from last issue



Developing the Wapping Beer Range

Angus began by reading through the entire Wapping Brew Book, which lists over a decade of brews, carefully checking all the many beer recipes – and in the case of Wapping that is a lot of different, (and award winning), beers.

Angus quickly introduced his own distinctive stamp to the beers by introducing a new range based, appropriately for a proud son of the Outer Hebrides, on the Scottish shilling system of payment for beer custom duty. The range features a 60 shilling (3.5%), a 70 shilling (3.7%) which has become a regular Wapping beer, plus an 80 shilling (4.2%) which is brewed in the more malty Scottish style.

Angus has also been experimenting with rye beers, including **Rye Smile** a 4% pale ale and **Autumn Rye**.



brewed with Bamberg Malt to give the distinctive lightly smoked flavour.

Angus is keen to experiment with new beers, including the new

Spring Ale brewed to complete the much awaited **Four Seasons** line up. Also look out for **Baltic Triangle IPA** (7.2%), a strong classic IPA. For those who remember Stan Shaw's 9% **Passage to Liverpool IPA**, brewed as the Liverpool CAMRA Beer Festival Special, they may need to beware that the Baltic Triangle does not become the Bermuda Triangle after a few pints or many.

Angus's Favourite Wapping Beer

With so many great beers in the Wapping Brew Book what is Angus's favourite Wapping beer? The answer is a beer last brewed some time ago, **Perch Rock**, which is brewed with Belgian yeast to give a distinctive taste. Angus is keen to re-introduce Perch Rock to the line up, so an early appearance is on the cards.

Angus commented that there had only ever been one beer he had drunk which he would describe as 'disgusting'. This was at a Scottish Beer Festival and was called Black Pudding Beer. The brewer had managed to ruin both the black pudding and the beer – some achievement!

Developing the Wapping Brewery

Plans are in hand to rearrange the brewery by moving the fermenters into what is now the cask storage

area, thereby achieving a more stable temperature for the fermenting beer.

Angus is keen to move to using wet yeast and to developing his own Wapping yeast strain. Currently Wapping uses Nottingham ale yeast which gives a neutral flavour to the beer.

To develop the yeast and to check closely on the ingredients and the beers he plans to set up a small laboratory. Angus has a Chemistry degree from Dundee Abertay University and has previously



worked a Laboratory Technician, experience which will be very valuable in setting up his own small lab.

Important improvements have been made to the cellar of the Baltic Fleet. The cellar is now fully temperature controlled at 11C and Angus does the venting and tapping for all the beers served in the Baltic Fleet bar. Three tier stillaging has been installed to provide more space and enable a wider range of cask beers to be served on the bar.

Wapping will continue to bottle some of their beers, but Angus describes bottling as 'a pain'. He is looking at ways of improving the process so as to offer a wider range of Wapping beers in bottle. Ironically given his previous career as Maitre d' at the Delifonseca restaurant in Stanley Street, he is now brewing their bottled house beer '**Heart of Gold**'.

Weekly Work Routine

Perhaps fortunately, Angus enjoys the opportunity to work alone and be captain of his own ship, undertaking the full range of tasks in running a brewery, from buying the ingredients, through the brewing, to the sales and even the final stage of accounting for the beer duty payments to Her

Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

His weekly work routine is;
Monday - cask washing, racking beer and bottling beers

Tuesday and Wednesday - Brewing
Thursday and Friday - sales and admin including returns to HMRC

A Message to CAMRA –

Campaign on Beer Quality in Pubs

Angus believes that CAMRA should focus on promoting an improvement in the beer quality in many pubs. He describes how frustrating it is for a brewer to find his beers served in less than good condition due to poor cellaring and serving skills at the pub. He feels too



many pubs are giving real ale and breweries a bad name because the pub staff are not capable of keeping and serving a good quality pint. There needs to be a much greater emphasis on helping pubs serve cask beer at better beer quality, and CAMRA should take a lead on this.

Hate Finings – Love Beer

Angus joked that 'Hate Finings – Love Beer' should appear on all Wapping Brewery T shirts.



Angus is a fan of unfiltered beer as he believes not adding finings give a fuller flavour beer. Not using finings, which usually are made from the swim bladders of fish, also makes the beers suitable for Vegans and Vegetarians. A number of

Wapping beers have been brewed without using finings and Angus intends to make this the regular practice with all the Wapping beers. So not only is Wapping brewing in good hands with Angus, but we can all look forward to some exciting developments both at the brewery and on the bar at the Baltic Fleet – Liverpool's Only Brew Pub.

John Armstrong

Four Seasons in One Day

The Baltic Fleet and Wapping Brewery Sail On

Liverpool CAMRA Get Together Meets the Brewer Angus Morrison and Enjoys Four Seasons in One Day Looking back to a week when the Isle of Man ferry struggled to leave port it was reassuring that Liverpool's only brew pub was firing on all cylinders. When Stan Shaw hung up his hops for the final time one could be forgiven for thinking the ship might founder but not a bit of it. Following his instructions from the Master, Captain Angus Morrison donned his sou'wester and immediately set about imprinting his own mark on the subterranean brewery.

Liverpool and Districts Branch arranged for Angus to bring us up to speed and talk about some of his ideas for the future. In an entertaining talk to CAMRA members and others keen to learn what went on in the bowels of the building Angus explained his passion for brewing and his approach to the creation of tasty new beers.



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'The Governor'

(3.8%), by **Marco Pierre White**, and brewed by **JW Lees**, is a firm favourite with our customers. It's a wonderful caramel coloured session ale, and is so popular that it's a permanent feature at Liverpool One Bridewell, and priced at just **£2.40 a pint**

We also have three other hand pulls with a regularly changing selection of well-kept real ales from various North West brewers such as Liverpool Organic, Melwood Brewery and Lancaster Brewery. Great brews, at a great price. As well as great cask ales we have a broad range of specialist spirits and a fantastic wine list.



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All Four Seasons

Notable was a decision to complete the four seasons by adding "spring" and "autumn" to the portfolio of Wapping beers; including the ever popular "summer" (well, actually it's always summer in the Baltic) and "winter" (just the thing when it's a bit chilly outside).

Talking about "spring" he described how a bewildering quantity of blood oranges from a local supplier plus black pepper had gone into the "spring" to give it its characteristically rich but sharp saison flavour at a healthy 5.2%.

Now there are four seasons in one evening all the year round, whatever the weather! Judging by social media gossip a good time was had by all sampling not only the new "big four", but also a couple of other tasty brews, plus a traditional cider and an interesting cider brandy,



SIMON

how it was full steam ahead on the catering front with the recent reintroduction of Sunday roasts supplied by local café-restaurant



The Four Seasons in One Day contd

both sourced from Somerset by Angus. **Food at the Baltic Fleet** While all of this was going on pub owner Simon Holt took time out from his busy schedule to explain

Alchemy. In a previous incarnation these were always one of the highlights of the weekend and I can imagine them being popular with the perfect accompaniment of one or more of Angus's beers. Don't ask me which one; I'll leave that with Angus or maybe check the weather forecast!

Geoff Edwards



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Activating CAMRA Members

24% of non-active members over 60 are willing to volunteer for CAMRA
The CAMRA National Members Weekend and AGM held in Nottingham in April passed the following motion;

'This Conference notes that the recent survey of CAMRA members showed that 24 per cent of the non active members over 60 were willing to volunteer for CAMRA, and around 3 per cent of non-active members said they would be willing to volunteer when they retire. Therefore this Conference instructs CAMRA branches to take a positive approach to these people by contacting them and giving them examples as to how they might contribute to the Campaign.'

Christine Cryne, CAMRA National Executive member, commented that this approach could lead to an additional 10,000 members becoming active with CAMRA branches. She urged branches to think differently and identify ways of engaging with and activating the 24% of non active members over 60. Engaging them in

branch activities such as magazine distribution, local beer festivals and pub surveys would be a real boost for many local branches. She pointed out the value in contacting those about to come up to retirement, many of whom are looking for new volunteering opportunities. This was an opportunity not to be missed.

The Official Organiser of the CAMRA National Members Weekends, Neil Leeson, pointed out at a meeting in Liverpool to prepare for the 2016 Members Weekend, that in his experience over the last twenty plus years it was the older members who could be relied on to do the many tasks associated with organising and delivering the Members Weekends.



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RUNNER UP OF THE 2015 CAMRA ISLE OF MAN BEER OF THE FESTIVAL - LITTLE KING LOUIS IPA 6%



ManxAle

From Dave Halliwell MerseyAle Isle of Man Correspondent

The Island of Real Ale Now It's 100% Real!



No need to ask if it's cask - it is!

After many years of campaigning the Isle of Man has at last achieved full 100% cask ale availability across the whole of the traditional pub estate on Island. This is truly exceptional, far outstripping real ale availability in other jurisdictions across the British Isles and is a unique local brewing industry marketing point for the Isle of Man in general. CAMRA hopes the '100% Real' unique selling proposition will attract more visitors to the Island, supported by other campaigning by IOM CAMRA and the CAMRA Beer Festival at the Villa Marina.

The final pub to add to the now complete 100% Real Island list is



The Viking, Castletown, which by early April was stocking ale from the **Hooded Ram** brewery. Originally built at the end of the 19th century in only ninety days, the pub, (initially named the Castletown Hotel), sits adjacent to the Castletown Steam Railway station and opposite **The Sidings** pub, which has been a long time cask ale stalwart and CAMRA Awards winner.



For the last half dozen years, the Island has been tantalisingly close to 100% real ale availability in traditional pubs, with only a couple of free houses and four or five **Heron & Brearley** (H&B) pubs not stocking real ale. Then a couple of years ago there was a sustained effort by H&B during Steve Pickett's temporary tenure with **Okells** to provide cask across the entire estate, by putting real ale into **O'Donnell's**, **Douglas's**, and the nearby **Sam's Bar**. Finally **The Royal** in Peel and the **Bowling Green** in Douglas received real ale. At the same time the freehouse **Baltic Inn** in Foxdale converted very successfully to cask, leaving just **The Viking**, which has now followed suit, making it 100% on Island.

This is in addition to several hotel bars and wine bars returning to cask, such as the **HQ Bar**, the **Wellbeck** and the **Ascot** hotels and **Jak's** in Douglas. In every case to date where there has been no change of venue format, cask has been sustained medium term or increased -something that only happens when there is financial viability, demand, and sales. No longer does the Isle of Man real ale visitor have to peer suspiciously

through the pub window to try and spot a hand pump indicating real ale - there will be one for certain! Mersey Ale wishes **The Viking** well, after many years of friendly banter on the subject!

The Bay Hotel Port Erin Wins CAMRA Isle of Man Cider Pub of the Year

With over forty nine ciders and perries selling out at the 2015 Isle of Man CAMRA Beer Festival, and over a dozen pubs stocking cider during the year, the local CAMRA group decided that the time was right to hold an annual IOM Cider Pub of the Year competition. Voting took place from a shortlist of all year round stockists, and **The Bay**



Hotel in Port Erin was voted as the worthy winner. **The Bay**, set in a magnificent location on Port Erin seafront, has for some time stocked four ciders and perries, often increasing the range in the busy summer months. At the time of visit, this pub with links to **Bushys**, was stocking three ciders and one perry, all from the **Weston's** stable, namely, **Family Reserve** (5%), **Country Perry** (4.5%), **Old Rosie** (7.35%) and **Rosie's Pig** (4.8%), all at £3.30 a pint, (aside from the much stronger **Old Rosie** at £3.80).



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It is believed that the Bay is the only regular stockist of a perry on Island, and congratulations go to the pub in winning the award.

Largest Number of Hand Pumps on Island - The Prospect, Douglas

As Mersey Ale goes to print a total of fourteen hand pumps have been installed in The Prospect, Douglas. There has always been room for the one huge cask ale venue pub in the



central Douglas area, as has long been proven in both Peel and Castletown with the exemplary Whitehouse and the Sidings. Now H&B have taken the plunge, and have chosen The Prospect as the Douglas pub to develop as a magnet for real ale choice.

The Baltic Inn, Foxdale

Is under new management and on a recent visit it was confirmed they will continue to stock cask ale in this most traditional of community pubs. New signage and cellar work have been under way, with a facility for a new hand pump line being installed. A further update will follow in MerseyAle as the year progresses, but rest assured the traditional charm of the outlet is safe in the hands of the new incumbents.



The Pub Walks of Douglas - Tours Commence plus Commemorative Book



These are now operational for the summer months. Those going on the walk get a detailed and stylish booklet describing the history of the pubs on route, with illustrations and photographs. Although sponsored by Heron & Brearley the book is written and illustrated independently by the tour guide John Cojeen, thereby providing a superb memento of the walk especially for those who are visiting the Island.

Old Market Grog Returns.

In a tie in with Bushys, The Old Market Inn, near the Quayside and bus station in Douglas will once again have a unique house beer for TT. **Old Market Grog** at 4.2%, will be produced in limited quantities,



with only 180 gallons available this year. The Market Inn is a popular venue for visiting bike fans, so the

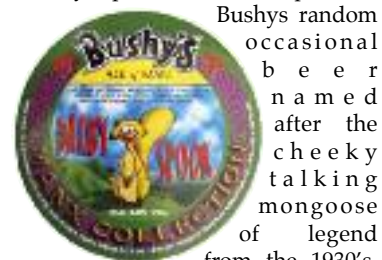
Grog will soon sell out during the busy TT motorbike race period. TT shirts will be produced celebrating the beer, with proceeds going towards the Southern 100 motor-bike races helicopter support fund. This smallest pub on Island still manages to retain immense community focus and backing, and has raised a staggering £9,850 for the fund in recent years, whilst also donating £2,000 to the hyperbaric chamber in Douglas. Frequenters of the pub will also notice a change



in the painting over the bar. Above the bar, there has for many years been a traditional painting of a Market scene, produced by one of the locals. This was switched earlier in the year, uncovering another 1962 painting of Douglas Bay and the classic Steam Packet steamers of the era, a painting not glimpsed for many years. However, another painting featuring another market scene has since replaced that, produced by another local customer, Jack McCarthy.

Dalby Spook Sightings!

And finally there have been multiple return sightings of the Dalby Spook, in the shape of a



occasional beer named after the cheeky talking mongoose of legend from the 1930's, which evaded the best efforts at that time of National UK newspapers to track it down. The Spook put in an appearance at the CAMRA Isle of Man Beer Festival, as well as featuring in pubs around the Island. However, one eagle eyed Villa Marina beer festival goer from Across reported spotting the creature south of the Watford Gap in the U.K., this time at a beer festival in that area - thought to be a first for the Spook!

Dave Halliwell
MerseyAle Isle of Man Correspondent

IOM Beer Festival special report
overleaf



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Isle of Man CAMRA Beer Festival 2015 - Special Report

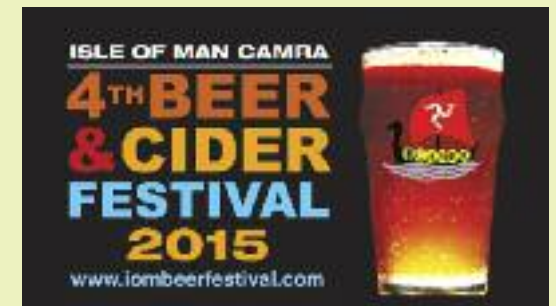
400 Plus Visit Festival From Across Fourth Festival Sets Record Attendance of over 3,000

The Fourth Isle of Man CAMRA Beer Festival moved for 2015 to a new larger venue at the Villa Marina, centrally located on Douglas promenade. Such had been the success of the Festival that the original venue at the Masonic Hall had been outgrown. The MerseyAle Editor, who visited for the three days of the Festival, and IOM Correspondent Dave Halliwell,



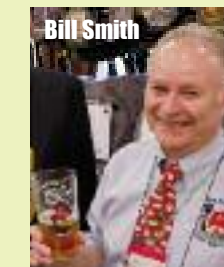
bring you a Special Report on the Event.

The Gods must have a downer on CAMRA at the Villa Marina. In 2010, the very successful CAMRA National Members Weekend held at the Villa, was hit by the Icelandic volcano eruption and subsequent ash cloud, which caused the cancellation of all UK air flights for nearly a week. Delegates had to switch to the Steam Packet to return home. In 2015 it was the turn of Manannan, the Manx God of the Sea, to breathe trouble into the Steam Packet fast craft named after him. Propulsion damage meant a week of sailing cancellations, turning a two and half hour crossing from Liverpool into an eight hour marathon via coach and the Ben my Chree from Heysham. Despite this major obstacle, over 400 people from Across made it to the Villa for the IOM CAMRA Beer Festival – a demonstration of the pulling power of this



Festival and its value to the economy of the Island. This figure is a substantial increase over the 187 achieved in 2014, reflecting the growing profile of the Festival.

Bill Smith, CAMRA IOM Organiser of the Festival commented;



"The Villa venue meant we could accommodate three times the number of people we could at the Masonic Hall. To achieve over 3,000 visitors shows how much of a draw the CAMRA Festival now is and the new central location is convenient for access by public transport across the Island."

Bill's talents extend further than just organising. As a qualified engineer he designed both the new bar and the stillaging used for the Festival, the latter being constructed by apprentices at the Steam Packet Workshops.

The Festival was opened by the Island's Lieutenant Governor Adam Wood. Appropriately, given this is his final year in office, this was a reprise of his opening of the First IOM CAMRA Beer Festival held at the Masonic Hall in 2012. He showed a keen interest



Bill and Lietenant Governor Adam Wood



in the beers, having asked for an advance copy of the Programme, and on arrival had his own hand written list of beers he wanted to try.



He served the first pint of the Festival, the Festival Special 'Joey's' brewed by **Bushys** to support the Joey Dunlop Foundation charity, appropriately handed to the seventeen times Side Car Champion



attracting many followers. The use of the Hall meant that the music was in a separate area and did not intrude on the main bar and seating areas, so everyone was happy.

Beer wise there were **132 different beers** compared with the 60 of the First Festival. Joey's was the Festival Special, whilst the strongest was **Hooded Ram CowKiller**, a double IPA at 9.2%. There was an exceptionally fine range of 49 real ciders and perries organised by Kevin Garrad, CAMRA IOM Cider Officer, which provided an excellent insight into a drink which is becoming increasingly popular on Island.

A noteworthy feature was the Young(er) Members Bar which was staffed by young CAMRA members and offered a range of unusual beers. The festival as a whole required around 60 volunteers per session.



Bushys sponsored the Festival glasses which had a very attractive logo design, whilst Hooded Ram sponsored the Staff shirts.

There was a vote for Beers of Festival with the result; 1. Hooded Ram Black Pearl, 2. Hooded Ram Little King Louis IPA, 3. Scottish Borders Lemondrop (2.8%)

There was also a vote for Ciders/Perries of Festival: Result 1. Rathay's Old Goat, 2. Double Vision Impaired Vision, 3. Manx Cider Company Jenny Layback

So overall a great step forward for the 2015 Festival both on Island and in attracting visitors from Across. And then came The Friday Night Surge

John Armstrong MerseyAle Editor



Lietenant Governor Adam Wood and Dave Molyneux

rider **Dave Molyneux**. This was also the Festival chosen charity, with a total of £866 raised by IOM CAMRA, £450 raised by the Charity's own stall at the Festival plus the proceeds of 10 pence per pint from Bushys for every pint of Joey's sold on Island.



The biking theme extended to the entertainment stage in the main Royal Hall theatre, where a side car



raced by the oldest crew of Nigel Smith and Chris McGahan, himself a Manx Grand Prix solo winner, was on display. The Festival was notable for the continuous live music from local bands, with no less than twelve bands appearing over the three days,

Friday Night at the Festival -

a Review by Dave Halliwell

Regrettably a queuing problem occurred on the early part of Friday evening. It had been hoped that moving



to the larger venue would eliminate the problem almost entirely, but on this first run at the prestigious Villa Marina venue, this was not so, and the CAMRA organisers acknowledge the frustration this caused to all.

There has been some subsequent speculation as to the cause of the problem, but MerseyAle was on site, joining with those in the entrance queue to experience the problems first hand, and therefore able to comment accurately.

The problem was essentially threefold.

Firstly, as is common with all large events and beer festivals in the U.K., queues developed outside the venue around the peak early evening Friday slot. This was much larger than anticipated, and exceeded all predictions from previous years, by some margin. This in itself would have still been manageable in a short time frame, as planned, and as is common to many large events.

However a second issue occurred once in the venue. Initially on entering a beer festival, imbibers tend to linger around the bar area for some time, perhaps an hour or two, investigating and sampling what is on offer, before later on moving around the venue to explore music, seating, food, and games areas etc. This occurred in the normal fashion, but the bar areas subsequently became congested. The Villa event

staff, quite rightly did their job in using their professional experience and expertise to react swiftly to the congestion by controlling safely the flow rate of festival goers into the bar, but this did have the knock on slowing down effect for those still trying to enter the venue, and those returning to the bar areas for a further drink.

The bar area used has been questioned by some as opposed to using the larger The Royal Hall. However, the bar area was previously used very successfully for a CAMRA National Members Weekend in April 2010, when up to a thousand people from the U.K. attended the venue. This is an event that CAMRA Isle of Man is hoping to return to the Island in a few years' time (minus the ash cloud of course). Whilst the bar was adequate for the vast majority of the opening hours, it proved not to be for the early Friday evening surge.

The third issue was that a much larger number of people than expected stayed on into the evening, thereby slowing access for those arriving after work. It had been thought during the planning stages that closing the large multi-roomed venue for a short period around Friday teatime would have been impractical

In summary, plans are underway to move the bar area for future events, specifically for the Friday early evening crowd surge, and by late April a meeting had already taken place to this effect. Context is important and the event was without doubt a huge success demand wise and in terms of showcasing the Island and local brewing industry, especially to the hundreds of visitors from the U.K. and the bulk of the 3000 attendees over the three days. All involved do acknowledge the difficulties on early Friday evening



Lietenant Governor Adam Wood

and the disappointment they caused for a not insignificant number of festival goers. The vast bulk of these attendees, showed considerable patience, which the CAMRA organisers acknowledge and appreciate.

*Dave Halliwell
MerseyAle IOM
Correspondent*

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General Election-

Holding Them to Account



Conservative 331 (overall majority 12)

Labour 232; SNP 56; Liberal Democrat 8; Democratic Unionist 8; Sinn Fein 4; Social Democratic and Labour Party 3; Ulster Unionist 2; Plaid Cymru 3; Green Party 1; UKIP 1.

The result of the General Election confounded all the commentators, pollsters and the politicians themselves. The widely anticipated 'closest General Election in decades' turned out to be an outright Conservative majority. The Conservatives now have a majority of 12 and David Cameron has made it clear he intends to implement the Conservative election manifesto in full.



The wipe out of many Liberal Democrats, down from 57 to just 8, included the former Business Secretary in the Coalition Government, **Vince Cable**, who introduced the Bill for reform of the PubCos. He lost his seat in Twickenham in an 11.79% swing from Liberal Democrat to Conservative.

One of the few Lib Dems to hold on was **Greg Mulholland** in Leeds North West, who had led the long and successful campaign to reform the PubCos and is Chair of the **Save the Pub Group**. He introduced the amendment that introduced new rights for the tenants of the PubCos, inflicting the first Coalition Government defeat on one of its own bills See MerseyAle

Winter 2014 edition pages 4 and 5. He held off a challenge from Labour to win his seat with a reduced majority of 2,907 in a 70% turnout.

Another Lib Dem to hold on was **John Pugh** in Southport with a reduced majority of 1,322 in a 5.38% swing from Lib Dem to Conservative.

The one Merseyside MP to VOTE AGAINST the PubCo reform amendment, Esther McVey, Conservative MP for Wirral West, and Minister of State for Employment in the Coalition Government, LOST her seat to Labour's Margaret Greenwood by 417 votes, with a swing of 3.5% from Conservative to Labour in a high turnout of 75.9%.

The new Employment Secretary who will have a lead responsibility for the pub and brewing industries, including the issue of the PubCos, is **Savid Javid**, Conservative MP for Bromsgrove. He was Culture Secretary in the Coalition Government and before entering Parliament was a successful City banker.

During the Election CAMRA lobbied all candidates to request



that they support the CAMRA Election Manifesto. Tony Morgan, Public Affairs Officer for Liverpool and Districts CAMRA Branch reports on the lobbying and on the next steps CAMRA will be taking to hold MPs to account. Tony writes;

1. Back action to support well run community pubs by:

- Ensuring pubs are better protected in the planning system
- Ensuring that large pub companies treat publicans fairly

2. Celebrate and promote Britain's real ale breweries by:

- Retaining discounted duty rates for small brewers
- Ensuring that beer duty is set at a level that supports UK brewing

3. Represent the interests of pub goers and beer drinkers by:

- Supporting consumer choice and the rights of consumers to fair treatment

CAMRA will be keeping the pressure on our elected representatives so that our aims and objectives are highlighted. In the run-up to the election CAMRA asked candidates to support pubs and real ale by asking them to pledge to do the following if elected:

670 candidates supported a similar pledge before the 2010 General Election. For the 2015 Election this rose substantially with 1,162 candidates supporting the CAMRA Election Manifesto, including 12 of those competing for Merseyside seats.

Liverpool and District CAMRA will contact the successful local candidates to remind them about the pledge they made about pubs and real ale.

What Next ?

CAMRA will continue to campaign for **cuts in beer and cider duty** as outlined in Pledge 2 above. Both were cut in the 2015 budget and attracted lots of headlines but it



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9 Handpumps

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applies to all beer and cider production, not just real ale and real cider.

What is probably more important is the **Small Breweries' Relief Scheme** introduced in 2002. This allows small brewers (annual production < 60,000 hectolitres or 1,319,815.5 gallons) to a reduced duty rate on a sliding scale. Brewers producing less than 5,000 hectolitres (109,985 gallons) per year get a 50% reduction in duty. This probably has a greater effect on keeping the prices of some cask beers low than the much publicised 1p reduction in excise duty. It also allows microbreweries some advantages when starting out and competing with larger regional brewers. We need to ensure our politicians keep this Relief Scheme in place.

It is no good having low duty rates on cask beer and cider if there are no pubs to drink it in so we need to get our elected representatives - MPs and local councillors - to make changes to planning law. Currently many valued pubs are being lost as a result of weak planning rules that allow pubs to be converted into convenience stores and a range of other uses without any planning application being made. The planning rules affecting pubs need to be strengthened to ensure that planning permission is required before pubs can be converted to any other use.

The current planning system also means that it is possible for developers to demolish free-standing pubs without planning

permission provided the pub in question is outside a conservation area and not a "listed building." Pubs listed as **Assets of Community Value (AVCs)** will now be subject to a full planning application should the owner wish to demolish or convert the pub into an alternative use but those pubs without this listing are still at risk. The planning rules need to be strengthened so that planning permission is always required before any pub can be demolished.

*Tony Morgan,
Public Affairs Officer,
Liverpool & Districts CAMRA*



Your Merseyside MPs

Apart from John Pugh in Southport who is Lib Dem, all the Merseyside MPs are Labour. They can be contacted by post at (name of MP), House of Commons, London SW1A 1AA and by email at the addresses listed below;

Field, Frank	Labour Party	Birkenhead	fieldf@parliament.uk
Dowd, Peter	Labour Party	Bootle	peter.dowd@councillors.sefton.gov.uk
Eagle, Maria	Labour Party	Garston and Halewood	eaglem@parliament.uk
Howarth, George	Labour Party	Knowsley	george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk
Ellman, Louise	Labour Party	Liverpool, Riverside	louise.ellman.mp@parliament.uk
Rotheram, Steve	Labour Party	Liverpool, Walton	steve.rotheram.mp@parliament.uk
Berger, Luciana	Labour Party	Liverpool, Wavertree	luciana.berger.mp@parliament.uk
Twigg, Stephen	Labour Party	Liverpool, West Derby	stephen.twigg.mp@parliament.uk
Esterson, Bill	Labour Party	Sefton Central	bill.esterson.mp@parliament.uk
Pugh, John	Liberal Dem	Southport	pughj@parliament.uk
McGinn, Conor	Labour Party	St Helens North	conorpmcgin@gmail.com
Rimmer, Marie	Labour Party	St Helens S and Whiston	marieecbe@hotmail.co.uk
Eagle, Angela	Labour Party	Wallasey	eaglea@parliament.uk
McGovern, Alison	Labour Party	Wirral South	alison.mcgovern.mp@parliament.uk
Greenwood, Margaret	Labour Party	Wirral West	mail@margaretgreenwood.org.uk

The Once and Future King The Pen Factory

Hope Street



Paddy Byrne

When you have been in the eyes of many people, a 'Legend in Your Own Lunchtime' and 'King of Hope Street' for over forty years, it takes some courage to start again from scratch with a different venture immediately next door to the site of your great triumph.

That is what Paddy Byrne the former owner of the legendary Everyman Bistro has done by opening his new venture the Pen Factory on Hope Street adjacent to the newly built Everyman Theatre. They say 'Never Go Back', as many football managers will attest – are you listening Howard? So have Paddy and the Pen Factory proved the old adage wrong? MerseyAle has been monitoring their progress since the opening in December 2014 and now here is the verdict.

Once you have sumo wrestled the curiously anonymous heavy sliding door open, you see the Pen Factory interior laid out below you along with its enticing outdoor courtyard seating area. The interior is deliberately a break away from the style of the former Everyman Bistro. The long, high, rectangular space could be described as distressed industrial warehouse chic, or a case of works canteen meets floor of multi storey car park. Whatever - It works.



The décor is stark minimalist grey and white relieved by areas of exposed brick work and warmed by splashes of yellow and orange. A feature has been made of silver metal ducting and coloured pipework. One end of the space has orange and yellow sofas, tables and chairs in the centre of the room and at the far end the very orange

open kitchen and servery draws the eye.

In contrast with the original subterranean Bistro, there is lots of natural light from the large windows, with doors leading out on to the sun trap courtyard now ready for summer drinking and eating al fresco. A wood burning fire that impersonates a flat screen television provides warmth and a focal point.

The long bar runs the length of the side of the room providing a visible focus when you enter

The building is owned by Paddy and was previously used as an annexe to the then Everyman Theatre. It was home to the Everyman Youth Theatre,

a rehearsal space, the wardrobe department, theatre offices and an area where the theatre sets could be built.



Different Yet the Same

The interior may be very different from the original Bistro, yet the same signature combination of good food and drink served in a bohemian environment, has been retained and re-invented for the 2010s. As with the Bistro the vibe is relaxed with customers welcome to linger and spend as much as they want, eat or drink or not, work at the tables, hold informal meetings, discuss, debate, be alone or in a group.



The new place has a buzz about it, and from opening has been busy throughout the day, including attracting a significant number of younger people. The one down side is the noise level when full, caused by the sound reflecting off the hard surfaces such that group conversation can be difficult at busy times.

You can go directly to the bar for service, or the friendly helpful young staff in their Breton style white T shirts with blue stripes, will come to you and provide table service for both food and drinks.



At The Bar

On the real ale front the good news is that there are six hand pumps grouped prominently in the centre of the bar offering a changing range of guest beers from a wide range of breweries, including local and micro brewers. The pricing strategy is by strength, with beers up to 4% at £3; up to 4.5%

at £3.20; up to 5% at £3.60 and over 5% at £4. There is always a session beer below 4% and a real cider. One thing to watch out for is to check that the staff do charge you the correct price for the beer, given that there is usually a wide range of different strengths on sale and on several of our test visits mistakes did occur. An additional item to watch for is that pints are topped up, as in early visits this was not always the case and is a particular issue with the table service. Serving short measure is a matter

that Paddy has drawn to the attention of the staff, so feel able to ask for a top up. There is a carefully judged wine list plus an array of fine Cognacs lined up behind the bar. A new feature is cocktails and fruit mocktails served with a sense of theatre and panache.

Attention has been paid to offering a wide range of specialist teas and coffees, all carefully brewed at the correct temperature and clearly attracting a keen clientele.

The Food and the Menu



Rob and Tim

Devotees of the original Bistro will be delighted to find that the impossibly tall figure of award

winning Tom Gill is the Head Chef, having joined with Paddy in this new venture. With Tom you know the food will be created with style, imagination and care.

The manager at the Pen Factory is Rob Mawdsley who takes a keen interest in building relationship with customers as well as ensuring the place runs smoothly.

Another noticeable change from the Bistro days is the issuing of a printed menu rather than the use of stylishly written chalk boards. The menus provide a minimalist description of the food – one liners without information on ingredients or the naming of the local 'food hero' suppliers which was a positive and helpful feature of the chalk boards. Curious for a place that has been a proud champion of fresh local produce and proper cooking.

The Pen Factory web site describes the menu as "equally designed for a swift lunch, leisurely evening meal or a drink with friends. The team are old hands at providing a sociable space where good company, good food and interesting drinks are found."



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Smaller Tastes and Larger Plates

The menu is designed to offer a wide choice of 'smaller plates' which can be mixed and matched, plus a choice of around six larger meals at around £10 to £13. Prices are comparatively rather higher than in the original Bistro.

The smaller tastes include; The ever popular home made Soup and Bread at £4, a variety of Quiches £5, Babaganoush, Southport Potted Shrimps, Humus and Bread, Greek Beans and Cheese, Pig Cheeks and Puy Lentils, and I kid you not, a Cheese and Onion Crisps Butty at a rather questionable £4 a go.

Another feature is the £9 Boards of assorted items with ones designed for Beer, Wine and Vegetarian. The Beer Board includes Scotch Egg, Ham, Mrs Kirkhams Lancashire Cheese, Olives, Conichous and Bread

The popular Salad Choice is back to the delight of many, although the range of salads is rather smaller and are no longer on view at a counter as in the original Bistro.

Larger plates echo the changing menu of the original Everyman Bistro, with such as Partridge and Puy Lentils, Bullfighters' Casserole, Pork and crackling, and usually a fish dish examples of the work of Tom Gill and the kitchen team.

The food is freshly cooked to order in the open kitchen and brought to your table by the staff

Opening times

Tuesday to Saturday: 11am - 12 midnight. Food served noon to 10pm
Closed Sunday and Monday

Pen Factory 13 Hope Street Liverpool L1 9BQ
info@pen-factory.co.uk

From The Last Post to Reveille

When the plaintiff strains of the Last Post, played by Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra trumpeter Brendan Ball, echoed around the Everyman Bistro at 2am on Sunday 3rd July 2011, leaving not a dry eye in the house (but many happy people who had queued for hours to be there for the last night events), few present thought another legend would rise from the impending demolition.

Well one is rising next door to the old – and one that is boldly different.

So All Hail to the Once and Future King, who has again successfully pulled the Sword from the Stone.

John Armstrong



'Awards are great, but the real reward is the quiet satisfaction of a clean plate' -

Paddy Byrne



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MerseyRAle Your next station stop



Wigan Goes Electric and also Micro

Electric trains commenced running between Liverpool Lime Street and Wigan North Western from 17th May (only six months later than planned but hey ho) with three Northern Rail trains per hour, whilst in the last year Wigan has seen a boom in micro pubs with no less than four opening since August 2014. These are;

Wigan Central – appropriately named after a former station and located under the railway arches in Arch No 1 Queen Street by Wigan Wallgate Station, the interior follows a railway theme and the



pub is run by the local Prospect Brewery. There are seven hand pumps with two offering prospect beers and the rest guests. Real ciders are a feature with up to four on offer.

Doc's Symposium, Mesnes Street. Very much micro it has room for about thirty customers but offers four real ales plus a deli counter. It was Wigan CAMRA pub of the Season Winter 2014.

Blundell's Café Bar, 90 Wigan Lane. Four Real Ales.

Albion Ale House, 12 High Street, Standish. A short bus ride from Wigan centre it has eight handpumps and offers two real ciders.

Wirral Wanderings

The West Kirby Round Just Got Bigger

New Real Ale Outlet - **The Abbey** Grange Road

Handily placed adjacent to the **West Kirby Tap** and West Kirby Merseyrail station, the Abbey on

Grange Road opened in 2015. Formerly the Rock Lobster bar, the premises have had a thorough refresh under the management of the Irby Mill pub, emerging in a black and silver colour scheme with the legend 'Cask, Craft, Wine'. The long bar features six hand pumps serving a changing range of real ales, often including **Peerless**, and **Purple Moose** and a stout,



plus regulars such as Thwaites Wainwright and Lancaster Bomber. There are three flat TV screens used to show Sky sport. Note the poster from the erstwhile Birkenhead Brewery with its 'Peerless Ales' slogan. Bar Snacks including a range of hot Pieminister Pies at £5.45, plus Pate and Cheese Boards



are available. Opening times are Monday to Thursday from 4pm; Saturday and Sunday from noon.

The West Kirby Tap Was in the final four of the **Wirral CAMRA Pub of the Year 2015 and was Winner of Wirral CAMRA Pub of the Season Summer 2014**. It is a dog friendly pub. It no longer doing hot food but is offering mixed cold platter boards, including Spanish, Italian, British, and Cheese selection. The eight hand pumps serve a changing



range drawing on the brewery swaps arranged by Spitting Feathers so some unusual beers appear. There is always a changing real cider. Live music often features on Saturday evenings.

The West Kirby Round now consists of nine real ale pubs, plus a bar / restaurant with a wide range of bottled conditioned beers and a specialist beer shop. See feature in MerseyAle Summer 2014.

The Pigeon and The Falcon Liverpool Pigeon Meets Birkenhead's Gallagher's Falcon's Nest

Both the Liverpool Pigeon and Gallagher's in Birkenhead have won their CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year Award and are now in the final of the Merseyside Pub of the Year – see pages 27. So what is the connection between a Pigeon and a Falcon?

Our Isle of Man readers will be familiar with the Falcon's Nest GBG listed hotel in Port Erin, but may not realise that the 2015 Wirral CAMRA Pub of the Year, Gallagher's, has its own Falcons Nest in the beer garden at the rear of the pub. A Peregrine Falcon nests in the tower at the nearby Hamilton Square Merseyrail station and has raised its young. The tower is visible from Gallagher's beer garden and naturalist, birdwatcher and TV Goodie, Bill Oddy, has been to the pub to see this unusual visitor. So now it is Pigeon versus Falcon for Merseyside Pub of the Year.



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CAMRA Books

CAMRA Books is the publishing arm of the Campaign for Real Ale. We publish books on beer, pubs, brewing and beer tourism. We published the first Good Beer Guide in 1974, and this annual title - soon to reach its 40th edition - has since gone on to become the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide with a print edition, mobile app and e-book now available. Since then we have gone on

to publish many other successful titles including Good Beer Guides to countries including Belgium and the West Coast USA, the ever-popular Good Bottled Beer Guide - now in its 7th edition - our Pub Walks guidebook series, highly illustrated standalone titles such as Cider, more specialist titles like Brew Your Own British Real Ale, and our best-selling 300 Beers to Try Before You Die!



Our title list continues to grow with over 30 books in print and exciting new titles being added to our list all the time. Our books are available for customers to purchase direct in the CAMRA Shop and are distributed to booksellers around the UK and beyond. Stockists include Amazon, Waterstones, Play, WH Smiths & many more.

To find out more simply visit www.camra.org.uk/camra-books



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Coach trips are run every month to a variety of destinations.

Coach Trips depart at 10am from opposite the Ship and Mitre, Dale Street, and return there around 9pm. Cost is £12 for CAMRA members, £15 for non members – so it pays to join CAMRA!

For full details of upcoming trips and how to book please check out the coach trip page on the branch website.

www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

The page is updated after the 1st of each month with details of the next trip being launched.

Any non-member considering coming on a CAMRA coach trip can save £15.

FREE COACH TRIP

Anybody who joins CAMRA for the first time and affiliates to the Liverpool & Districts branch, will be offered a free seat on a future branch coach trip. Check Liverpool CAMRA website for details

13th June - Rotherham including the Chantry Brewery & Worksop

11th July - Bishops Castle, Clun and Wistanstow. People can stay all day in Bishops Castle if they wish for the Pubs Festival.

8th August - Pubs in North Derbyshire finishing in Chesterfield.

5th September - West Cumbria. Coniston, Broughton & Foxfield.

10th October – Nottingham
14th November – Destination to be announced

Coach Trips depart at 10am from opposite the Ship and Mitre, Dale Street, and return there around 9pm.

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Liverpool CAMRA Branch Diary

Sunday 7th June - Merseyrail Southport Line Pub Crawl – 11.23 train from Liverpool Central Station ; meet outside the MtoGo booking office shop from 11am.

Thursday 11th June - LocAle Pale Ale Trail - Meet Caledonia, Catharine Street, Liverpool, 7.15pm. Then Blackburne Arms, Pen Factory, Flute, Grapes (Knight Street), Lime Kiln.

Wednesday 17th June - Special Branch Meeting re future Liverpool CAMRA Beer Festivals. Meet in Sphinx Bar, Liverpool University Guild of Students, 160 Mount Pleasant (close to Augustus John pub) at 7.30pm.

Thursday 25th June - Last Thursday Meet Up - Lime Kiln, Concert Square, Liverpool City Centre from 7.30pm.

Wednesday 15th July - Branch Get Together - Coffee House, Church Road, Wavertree – 8pm. Join us for an 'out of town' evening in this splendid ornate Victorian pub. Numerous buses from all directions - 62, 68, 78, 79, 79C plus Halton 14 & 61.

Saturday 18th July - Inter-Branch Crown Green Bowls Match. A joint social event organised by St Helens CAMRA - start 1pm. The Brown Edge, Nutgrove – on main road between Rainhill and St Helens. Nearest station Thatto Heath, on Wigan line from Lime St Main Line Station. Or bus 10A from L'pool City Centre.

Thursday 30th July - Last Thursday Meet Up at Liverpool Organic Beer Festival at St Luke's (bombed-out) Church. You need to buy your festival tickets in normal way through EventBrite, but meet up as group outside entrance at 7pm.

Wednesday 19th August - Branch Get Together - meet Childwall Fiveways Wetherspoons at 6pm (5pm if want to eat there beforehand) for Pub Walk to Woolton - the scenic route – in conjunction with Liverpool Brisk Walkers and in commemoration of their founder Dave Dent.

Thursday 27th August - Last Thursday Meet Up – Vernon Arms, Dale Street, from 7.30pm.

Saturday 29th August - Wigan Walk Around - 11.28 am train from Lime Street Main Line Station. Meet opposite ticket windows from 11am.

See website www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk for updates

liverpoolcamra.org.uk



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Copy date Weds 5th August. Next edition due out mid September



whatpub.com

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

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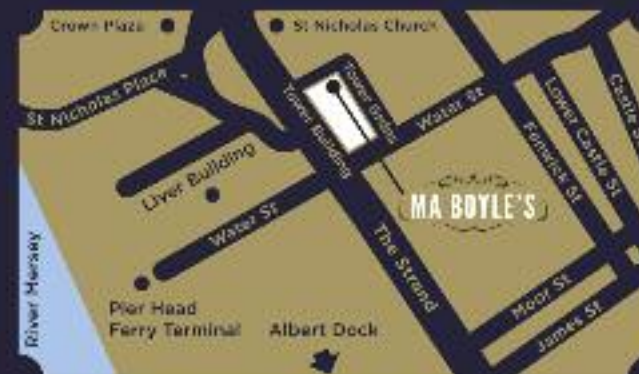
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