

# MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Winter 2016 FREE

## In this issue:

- Late Night Levy debate
- 2017 Beer Festival details
- Changes at The Scotch Piper
- Brewing Liverpool's rebellious spirit



Incorporating:

**ISLE OF MAN NEWS**

**WIRRAL NEWS**

**ST HELENS NEWS**



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE



# Metropolitan Cathedral Crypt, Brownlow Hill

# 15th - 18th February 2017



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

## Wed 15th 6pm – 10pm £5

Wednesday night is free for CAMRA members and is pay on the door only. There will only be about 50 beers available

Thursday 16th	6:30pm – 10:30pm	£7
Friday 17th	12pm – 4pm	£8
Friday 17th	6:30pm – 10:30pm	£10
Saturday 18th	12pm – 4pm	£9
Saturday 18th	6:30pm – 10:30pm	£8

Discount in Beer Vouchers for CAMRA members

All tickets other than for Wednesday are Internet sales only  
Ticket sales start on 9th December at 7am

Price includes: Booking fee (where applicable), Souvenir Glass\*, Full Colour Programme\*

\*Not CAMRA members on Wednesday

For details see website:

# www.liverpoolbeerfestival.org

Further important information on purchasing tickets on page 31

## MerseyAle

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QR Codes page 59



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

# MerseyAle



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

## Welcome to the Winter edition of MerseyAle

It's that time of year when pubs across the land are adorned with festive decorations, as the Christmas season begins in earnest. Our abundance of excellent real ale pubs provide the perfect respite from Christmas shopping and an ideal meeting point to celebrate with friends and family. Indeed, the festive period is the ideal time to take advantage of our proud pub culture. With 2017 just around the corner, it's also an appropriate time to reflect on what's been a busy and important year for CAMRA in our region. Members' Weekend came to Liverpool in April, as the CAMRA AGM was held at the Guild of Students, in what proved to be a major success and a real coup for the city. During the summer, a survey and subsequent review began the process of a new-look MerseyAle, which was relaunched as an A5 magazine in time for Autumn. I hope the new format is to your liking and that readers everywhere continue to enjoy this publication.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition of MerseyAle. Suffice to say, your input is invaluable and contributions are always welcome. Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and I hope that 2017 is a healthy and prosperous year for us all.

Cheers.

Dave MacBryde  
MerseyAle Editor

## Message from The Chair

Hello and welcome to the second edition of our revamped MerseyAle. Christmas is fast approaching - and what better way to celebrate than in your local, with a pint of real ale - not forgetting to put in those all-important beer scores!

The new year will no doubt bring new challenges for the Branch, with the ongoing threat that PubCos bring, as well as the plans to introduce a Late Night Levy in Liverpool. But by working together, we can help our pubs to not only survive, but also prosper - even in these uncertain times.

If you are a CAMRA member and would like to help the Branch with the challenges ahead, please attend our AGM on 18th January in The Ship and Mitre at 8pm. We would love to see you and hear your views on the campaign.

February brings our annual beer festival: ticket details can be found on Page 2, but please be quick, as they are likely to sell out fast! Finally, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy 2017.

Sonia James-Henry  
Branch Chair





The **Lion** is to reopen soon. Dave, previously a barman in the pub, has taken on the tenancy. Some work is needed, but the pub should be open by the time you read this.

Good wishes to Dave: it is good news that this historic pub will be trading again.

**Thomas Rigby's**, on Dale Street, was refurbished during the summer. No structural changes, but there are now six handpumps in the centre of the



bar - similar to sister pub **Fly in the Loaf**. Two pumps usually have **Okell's** beers and four are guests. Fiona, who has been the manager here for many years, has been promoted as manager of all the company's mainland pubs, including new outlets in Yorkshire, as well as the three in Liverpool and one in Chester. Jim, ex deputy, has taken over as manager at Rigby's.

This means that Fiona is now the boss over her partner Dominic. He may have gained some brownie points with **Fly in the Loaf** appearing on the front of the new 2017 Good Beer Guide.

For some time, the **Rum Porter** brewed by Boggart Hole Clough Brewery had been a popular choice at the **Vernon Arms** on



Dale Street. Unfortunately, the brewery ceased trading, so the beer is no longer available. To breach the gap, a new house beer has been commissioned from the **Stamps Brewery - Rhum Noir, 4.6%**. This joins the pub's first house beer on tap - **Johnny Handsome**, brewed by Liverpool Organic. Another beer (also 4.6%) has since been produced, named **Gitan Zarah's Plum Porter**.

**New Moon** (the company operating the **Old Blind School**



on Hardman Street) ceased trading in late September. However, a new company - **Charnwood Catering** - has taken over five outlets, including the OBS. Beers from the **Mobberley Brewhouse** were available during October.

**Yates** at Queens Square reopened after being refurbished. There are still four hand pumps here - two with

national brands and two from other breweries. **Titanic** and **Oakham** were stocked early on.

Another Stonegate pub, The **Crafty Chandler** on Bold Street, has recently had a change in management. Since then,



different beers have been available. These are sourced from numerous breweries and are being rotated across the three hand pumps, rather than just the national brews on tap previously.

**Hard Times & Misery** had **Britman IPA** from Burton Manor on tap during October. This was the first time one of their beers has gone in to a Liverpool pub. This continued Greig's policy of stocking beers from as many breweries in the area as possible.



## MerseyAle PUB NEWS

HT&M has now introduced a Cask Ale Club. The club operates on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays ONLY. As well as there being a 50p reduction in the cost of a pint of real ale, you'll also be given a stamp card. Get it stamped every time you buy a pint: when you get ten stamps, your next pint will be FREE.



The **Esperanza** on Hope Street has been rebranded as the **Death Row Diner** and no longer sells real ale.

## Baltic Triangle

We have been informed by a member via WhatPub that **Constellations** on Freeland



Street will not be selling real ale through the winter. With much of the venue being outdoors, it will be quieter.

Not far away at **The Baltic Social**, the hand pump was not in use on my last two visits.

Over the other side of Parliament Street at the **Brewery Tap, Titanic Plum Porter** is becoming a favourite. Unfortunately, due to large

demand, Robert from the Six Degrees North brewery has not been able to supply Tom (the publican here) with beer



recently. Hopefully, these Scottish beers will be back on the bar at the Brewery Tap soon. Meanwhile, bottles are still available.

## Wavertree

**Frank's** on Smithdown Road now has a third hand pump



fitted and there are now usually two beers on tap. **Marston's Wainwright** has been joined by **Liverpool Organic 24 Carat**.



Not far away, the **Willow Bank** has been refurbished and is now painted and signed in the green



colours of latest owner, **Greene King**. Up to ten cask beers can be available at the busiest times. The brewery's own beers - including house beer **Salix** - and one from **Castle Rock** are regularly available. Guest beers tend to be from the more established breweries.

## West Derby

**The Hare & Hounds** in West Derby village has had six hand pulls installed. Currently **Greene King IPA** and **Bombardier** are available.

## Old Swan

**Cask Liverpool Micropub** has increased choice with five beers on a Thursday and seven beers



from Friday. To maintain quality, there will just be the usual four early in the week. To facilitate this increase, the three ciders are now served chilled gravity fed from the bar wall, which has freed up hand pumps.





## Old Swan contd

The sign outside **The Alehouse** on Prescot Road invites people



to 'Come inside, you may like it'. We hope drinkers who do not normally drink real ale will do so, with the rest of us knowing that we will. Five out of the six pumps are now serving beer. The cider on the sixth is complemented by up to three more kept in the cellar. Owner, Lee Cook (apologies to him that I mistyped his name previously) is now offering a **three-thirds tasting paddle** for £3.50. Lee is also now giving CAMRA members a discount.

## Garston

**The Masonic** on Gladstone



Road in Garston has relaunched its Tuesday evening club. From 6pm, on payment of £5 you get tokens to drink four pints of cask beer. This makes the beer even cheaper than the £2 a pint pub members' deal offered at

other times and the regular discounted price for a pint of cask beer of £2.30.

## Speke

**The Wetherspoon Express**, airside at Liverpool Airport, has been offering two beers on the hand pumps this summer. One is normally **Peerless Pale**. The other often has another Peerless beer, but as I type this, I am enjoying **Liverpool Craft Toast**.



This makes flying out of my local airport even more enjoyable.

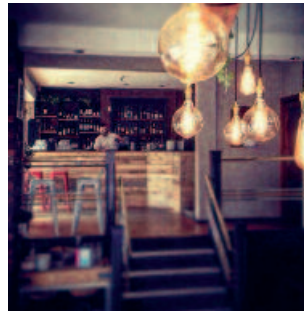
## Bootle

**The Merton** is to close on 14th December. This is part of the Wetherspoon policy not to have two pubs in an area effectively competing with each other.

## Crosby

**The Workshop** at 47 Crosby Road North, L22 4QB (formerly known as Charlie Parkers) is a bar/restaurant. Drinkers are welcome in the downstairs bar where local bottled beers from **Neptune, Red Star and Rock the Boat** are available. The current management are considering cask beer.

Rock the Boat brewery has been giving manager Steve advice - and also hope to have a presence there in addition to their bottled beers. Opening times: Wednesday and Thursday, 5pm to midnight.



Friday and Saturday, 3pm to midnight and Sunday, midday to 10.30pm.

**This is Livin' Bar & Grill** (4A Carnegie Avenue, Crosby, L23 3BR) is selling one cask beer, usually from a local micro. Beers



from **Liverpool Craft Beer Co.** have been appearing, with **Quokka (3.9%)** on recently. **LCB Co.** bottled beers are also available. It is primarily a cafe bar/restaurant, but drinkers are welcome, although space may be limited on Friday and Saturday evenings.  
*By Tony Williams*

# MerseyAleBrewerynews

## Ad Hop Brewery

**Andy** from **Ad Hop Brewery** has told me that he intends half of each of their future brews to



be cask ale. The remainder will be sold as key keg or bottled. Advances in canning equipment could mean this method of packaging being used soon. Most of us probably have not drunk a canned beer recently. Andy reports a good beer in a can is as good as - if not better than - one in a bottle.

## Rock the Boat Brewery

(Little Crosby) is producing a small number of bottled beers. They are all bottle conditioned



(Real Ale in A Bottle) and are held for at least a month in cold storage to condition. They have been selling well in the **Crosby Bottle Beer Shop**, College Road, Crosby - and are also

available in the **Blackburne House Cafe Bistro** in Liverpool.

**Terry** has tweeted that he has left **Liverpool Craft Brewery**. We wish him well for the future.

## Neptune Brewery

**Neptune Brewery** has settled into the 6BBL kit now (1BBL or Barrel=36 gallons) - and is brewing to capacity twice a



week. The brewery is now packaging keg conditioned key kegs within the CAMRA remit. Bottled beers were relaunched during October, with new labelling to compliment the new pump clips.



Brewer Les brewed a collaboration brew with the **Pied Bull** in Chester for their beer festival at the end of October. New cask beers brewed recently

have been **Fugu** (the name of the infamous poisonous fish), a 4.0% Pale Ale brewed with Sorachi Ace hops from Japan - and **Black Moor**, a 4.0% Porter. Another dark beer - **Black Percular** - was available at Three Piggies recently.

Some stronger IPA's and some other specials will be brewed for key kegs, but Les will cask a couple of these as specials for regular customers.

## Big Bog

A new beer from **Big Bog Brewery** is **Will O the Wisp** - the second beer named after the ghostly apparitions seen floating over marshes and bogs (the first being Hinkypunk). At



4.7% ABV, this is a premium golden coloured ale made with Citra, Chinook and Cascade hops in generous proportions. The beer has a distinctive hoppy aroma with good bitterness and loads of floral/citrus character.

## Top Rope

A new brewery has opened in the south end of Liverpool. To start with, **Top Rope Brewing** will be concentrating on bottled beers.

*By Tony Williams*



# Pub of the Year 2017 nominations



**We are currently still accepting nominations for Pub of the Year (POTY) 2017.**

Paper forms will be made available at the **Christmas Party** (entry by ticket only) at the Augustus John on Saturday 10th December - and at the **Branch AGM at the Ship & Mitre on January 18th 2017.**

An online nomination form is also available on the branch website - and you can also submit nomination(s) by emailing:

[poty@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:poty@liverpoolcamra.org.uk)

**Andre Fu**  
**Pub of the Year Co-ordinator**

## POTY Terms and Conditions

To nominate a pub for Pub of the Year 2017, you **must** be a member of the **Liverpool & Districts CAMRA branch**. If you have either a brown or silver membership card, it should state if you are a member of the branch. If it doesn't - **or if you have a gold card - please contact Membership Services on 01727 798440 or [membership@camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@camra.org.uk) to confirm.**

Members are invited to vote for their favourite city centre pub **and** their favourite suburban pub, but you do not have to vote

for both. You may vote for a city centre pub and leave the suburban box blank or vice versa. This is how we select the pubs that go forward to be judged for our Pub of the Year. Nominated pub(s) **must be within** the branch area (i.e. not in St Helens, Wirral or Formby etc.), so please don't waste your vote.

We define city centre pubs as those on the main body of the pub map, which can be found on the branch website, along with a list of the suburbs contained within our branch. If you are unsure that a particular pub is within the branch area, you can check by searching on the **WhatPub** database ([www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com)). The responsible branch will be stated at the bottom of the entry.

**Only one vote per member will be allowed.** Nominations can be made via the Liverpool CAMRA website. Nomination forms will also be made available at future get-togethers and coach trips or by emailing [poty@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:poty@liverpoolcamra.org.uk) with your name, membership number and nominations.

Reminders will be issued through Twitter, Facebook and monthly branch emails. The closing date for nominations is **29th January 2017**. This is to allow ample time for the judging process.

As in previous years, the three city centre pubs and two suburban pubs that get the most votes will go forward for judging. This process has been devised to recognise the fact that there are so many good pubs in our branch area - and it is a means of fairly reflecting this in the voting system. Each pub will then be visited twice by a panel of judges chosen by the committee.

The judging process will be conducted along national guidelines. The results of the competition will be announced at a future Get Together (TBC). There will be one Pub of the Year winner.

Finally, I would like to make it clear that I compile the results and therefore do not get involved in the judging process. Intimidation of any member of the Liverpool & Districts CAMRA committee regarding this - or any other matter - will not be tolerated.

**Action will be taken against licensees or members who initiate any form of intimidation (including via social media). Any comments or queries regarding the competition should be raised either at a Get Together or a Committee Meeting.**

**Andre Fu**



## Changes at The Scotch Piper

Julie, the licensee at The Scotch Piper, left the pub on 13th November. She wrote on social media that the reason for her moving on was her disagreement with Admiral Taverns' plans to introduce food into the pub.

A planning application has been submitted to demolish the sixties buildings to the rear and erect a new single-storey extension.

Up to now, the pub has relied on wet sales only and has not opened at lunch times on weekdays. One can understand the owners seeking to introduce food to improve the revenue at the pub. However, you can also understand the view of Julie and the 300 people who signed the petition against change, that this historic pub is not suitable to be converted into a food-driven pub.

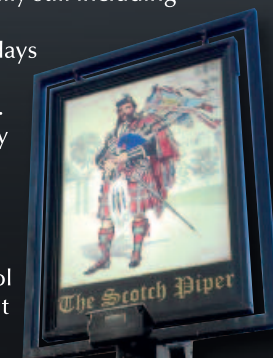
A food pub is likely to attract more people arriving by car. The car park at the Scotch Piper is not the biggest. Any expansion of the car park would infringe on the outdoor drinking areas that make the pub so attractive in good weather. On 16th November, Ray - who is also involved in running the nearby Running Horses - has taken on the lease at The

Scotch Piper. Bartender Trev reports that the pub will continue to operate as it has previously. The house beer - Pipers 1320, brewed by Marston's - will continue to be served, whilst the other two pumps will continue to dispense a variety of beers, hopefully still including LocAles.

The folk club on Thursdays and the 'open mic' on Saturdays will continue. The bikers that regularly visited on Wednesdays will be made welcome again.

With bus stops for the 300 route from Liverpool to Southport being right outside, drinkers can use the service to visit the pub until the early evening. At present, the pub will open at 4pm on weekdays and from midday at weekends. Hopefully, the hours will be extended in due course. Any major change to the pub is still some time away.

By Tony Williams







## Where to Find LocalAle in Liverpool (correct as of Nov 2016)

**Abbey**, 85-89 Hanover Street, L1 3DZ  
**Augustus John**, Peach Street, L3 5TX  
**Baltic Fleet**, 33 Wapping, L1 8DQ  
**Barkers Brewery**, Archway Road, Huyton, L36 9UJ  
**Belvedere**, 8 Sugnall Street, L7 7EB  
**Blackburne**, 24 Catharine Street, L8 7NL  
**Blues Bar**, 21-23 Moor Lane, Crosby, L23 2SE  
**Caledonia**, 22 Caledonia Street, L7 7DX  
**Cat & Fiddle**, St Martin's House, Bootle, L20 3LG  
**Cavern Pub**, 5 Mathew Street, L2 6RE  
**Central**, 31 Ranelagh Street, L1 1JP  
**Childwall Fiveways**, 79 Queens Drive, L15 6XS  
**Clove Hitch**, 23 Hope Street, L1 9BQ  
**Cobden**, 89 Quarry Street, Woolton, L25 6HA  
**Corner Post**, 25 Bridge Road, Crosby, L23 6SA  
**Crown Hotel**, 43, Lime Street, L1 1JQ  
**Dispensary**, 87 Renshaw St, L1 2SP  
**Excelsior**, 121-123 Dale Street, L2 2JH  
**Fall Well**, Roe Street, L1 1LS  
**Flanagan's Apple**, Mathew Street, L2 6RE  
**Font**, Unit 3, Arrad Street, L7 7JE  
**Frank Hornby**, 38 Eastway, Maghull, L31 6BR  
**Gold Balance**, Newton Gardens, Kirkby, L32 8RR  
**Grapes**, 60 Roscoe Street, L1 9DW  
**Hard Times & Misery**, 2b Maryland Street, L1 9DE  
**Hub**, 16 Hanover Street, L1 4AA  
**Jawbone Tavern**, 12 Litherland Rd, Bootle, L20 3BZ  
**Lime Kiln**, Fleet Street, L1 4NR  
**Liver**, 137 South Road, Waterloo, L22 0LT  
**Liverpool Pigeon**, 14 Endbutt Lane, Crosby, L23 0TR

**Love & Rockets**, 52 Lark Lane, Aigburth, L17 8UU  
**Masonic**, 35 Gladstone Road, Garston, L19 1RR  
**Mackenzie's Whisky Bar**, 32 Rodney Street, L1 2TQ  
**Navigator**, 694 Queens Drive, Old Swan, L13 5UH  
**Newington Temple** (formerly Bier Newington / Ropewalk), 8 Newington, L1 4ED  
**North Western**, 7 Lime Street, L1 1RJ  
**Old Bank**, 34 South Road, Waterloo, L22 5PE  
**Old Bank**, 301 Aigburth Road, Aigburth, L17 0BJ  
**Old Blind School**, 24 Hardman Street, L1 9AX  
**Pen Factory**, 13 Hope Street, L1 9BQ  
**Pumphouse**, The Colonnades, Albert Dock, L3 4AN  
**Queen's Picturehouse**, 47 South Rd, Waterloo, L22 5PE  
**Ranelagh's Tavern**, 15-17 Ranelagh Street, L1 1JX  
**Raven**, 72-74 Walton Vale, Walton, L9 2BU  
**Refinery**, Josephine Butler Building, Hope Street, L1 9BP  
**Richard John Blackler**, 1-2, Charlotte Row, L1 1HU  
**Richmond Tavern**, 23a Church Rd, Wavertree, L15 9EA  
**Roscoe Head**, 24 Roscoe Street, L1 2SX  
**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  
**Willow Bank Tavern**, 329 Smithdown Road, Wavertree, L15 3JA  
**Ye Hole in Ye Wall**, 4 Hackins Hey, L2 2AW

**\*\*New additions are highlighted in RED\*\***

## Merseyside Pubs CAMRA Discount

(correct as of Oct 31st 2016)



### Discounts on production of a valid CAMRA card

- **Central & Commercial**, Ranelagh St – 20p off (pints only)
- **Willow Bank Tavern**, Smithdown Road – 10% off (except Tuesday after 6pm)
- **Flute**, Hardman St – 10% off except Tuesday, when pints are £2.10
- **Ma Egerton's**, Pudsey St – 10% off
- **Pumphouse**, Albert Dock – 25p off (pints only)
- **Hare and Hounds**, Liverpool Road North, Maghull – 20p off (pints only). Monday £2.49/pt
- **Victoria Cross**, Sir Thomas St - 20p off (pints only - except Saturday)
- **Richmond Tavern**, Church Rd, Wavertree - 20p off (pints only). Monday £2.49/pt
- **Abbey**, Hanover St – 10% off
- **The Liver**, South Rd, Waterloo – 20% off
- **Yates**, Queens Square – 10% off
- **Ale House**, Prescot Road, Old Swan – 20p off (pints only)
- **Baltic Fleet**, Wapping (20p off pints and 10p off a half at all times)



### Discount Days (available to anyone)

- **Flute**, Hardman St – Tuesday ONLY: All day - £2.10
- **Willow Bank Tavern**, Smithdown Road – Tuesday ONLY from 6pm. All real ale - £2.25
- **Masonic, Garston** – Tuesday ONLY from 6pm. Four pints for £5.00 inc. real cider
- **Mackenzie's**, Rodney Street – £2 all day Monday to Thursday (pints only)
- **The John Brodie**, Allerton Road – Tuesday ONLY. All day - £1.95
- **Hard Times & Misery**, Maryland St – Cask Ale Club (Tuesday - Thursday) 50p off pints and Buy 10, get 1 free



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

All information correct as of 31/10/2016. Subject to change at short notice. Discount offered at management discretion. This list is not exhaustive. Any new additions will be highlighted in RED.

If you are a licensee and are interested in joining the scheme, then please contact us at [locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:locale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk)

\*We will advertise your pub through this column in every edition of MerseyAle and on the Liverpool & Districts CAMRA website.

By Andre Fu

FREE advertising\* for pubs joining the CAMRA DISCOUNT PUBS scheme.



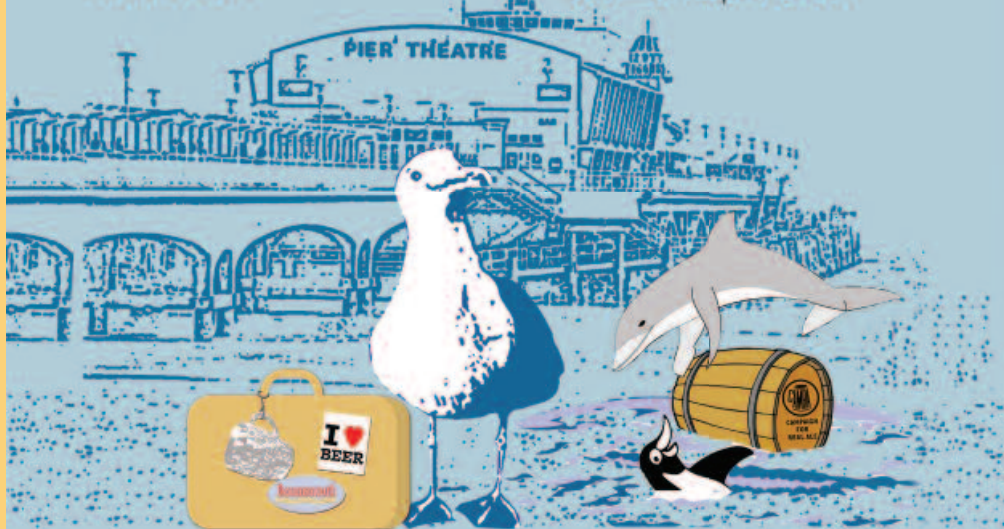


CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

# CAMRA 2017 AGM

MEMBERS' WEEKEND

Bournemouth International Centre  
7th - 9th April 2017



Please register online at: [www.camraagm.org.uk](http://www.camraagm.org.uk)  
or return form to 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 4LW

Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ Joint Membership # (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Surname \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ (Closing date for postal & online registration is Friday 17th March 2017)

If you would like to volunteer, please circle below to indicate when you would like to work. Your details will be passed on to the staffing officer and you will be contacted closer to the event.

Tue AM / PM    Wed AM / PM    Thur AM / PM    Fri AM / PM    Sat AM / PM    Sun AM / PM

Please circle if you have any specialist skills: first aider / cellarman / local knowledge / logistics / customer service / other

# Cheap supermarket beer and planning loophole



## 'Cheap supermarket beer and planning loophole' behind closure of so many pubs across Bootle



Reprinted with kind permission from Tom Duffy and Liverpool Echo

A pressure group has blamed the sale of cheap beer in supermarkets and a loop hole

in planning regulations for the closure of so many pubs across South Sefton.

### Pub closures

Many well-known pubs in Bootle, Litherland, Netherton and Seaforth have closed in recent years. Bootle has lost once-popular boozers such as **The Talbot, Elm House, Wyndham Hotel and St George's Tavern.**

Wetherspoon's has said that **The Merton Inn** - opposite Sefton Magistrates court - is up for sale, and uncertainty surrounds other pubs in the town.

Meanwhile, Seaforth has lost **The Royal, Sandown, The Claremont, The International, The Castle, Seaforth Arms**

**and Fellowship Club.** The town now has just two pubs; **The Doric and The Caradoc.**

The closure of **The Priory** in Litherland sparked a major campaign to stop developers demolishing the historic pub, which dated back to the Napoleonic wars. **The 'Save the Priory Action Group'** fought a doomed battle to reopen the former pub on Sefton Road - and to stop a housing group from demolishing it.

Developers wish to transform the **Cabbage Inn** pub in Netherton into a new a business, and there are similar plans for other pubs in the area. **Tony Morgan**, from the Liverpool branch of CAMRA,







www.bigbog.co.uk Tel: 0151 5580290

## BREWING AWARD WINNING BEERS SINCE 2011



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 The Baltic Fleet Pub  @Baltic  [balticfleetpubliverpool.com](http://balticfleetpubliverpool.com)

33a Wapping, Liverpool L1 8DQ 0151 709 3116

told the ECHO that the sale of cheap beer in supermarkets - and a loop hole in planning law - had contributed to the closure of so many pubs across south Sefton.

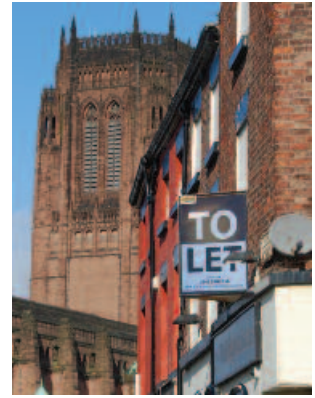
*He said: "The easy availability of cheap alcohol in off-licenses and supermarkets has made it harder for many pubs. The sale of alcoholic drinks for home consumption now exceeds sales in pubs and bars, because it is so cheap. Tesco can sell 20 cans of Foster's lager for £13, which works out at £1.48 per litre.*

*"A pub manager has to pay around £40 for the same canned beer, so this makes it more expensive to drink in a pub, as the manager has to pass the increased cost on to the customer. This contributes to declining sales in pubs, as managers struggle to keep a business going.*

*"But the most pressing issue locally is the lack of protection for pubs through the planning process. It is too easy to change the use of a pub, or demolish it, without the need for planning permission. We are concerned about this, because some pub-owning companies are selling some of their pubs on to property companies. Some of these new owners close the pubs and develop the sites into retail spaces for supermarket chains. "Within planning rules, pubs fall under class A and are in the sub-class A4 - drinking establishments. They can be converted into any of the other uses within class A, namely: A1 - shops; A2 - financial and*

*professional services; A3 - restaurants and cafes and; A5 - hot food takeaways, without the need for planning permission. They can be converted into any of the other uses without the need for planning permission."*

Tony added: "There are examples of property developers buying pubs, then closing them and changing the use to office space. The site is no longer a pub, so the owner



waits until the fuss over the pub closure has died down, then converts or redevelops the former pub into apartments or flats. No one makes a fuss, because who wants to fight for an estate agent's office to be saved? The pub has long gone. "To stop this, we need a change to planning policy from both Government and local authorities, to make it more difficult to close down and convert or demolish a pub. Government could remove PDRs from the A4 planning sub-class, so that all change of use needs prior planning permission.

"A pub in the heart of the community is where many of us feel safe, surrounded by friends and like-minded people. Many of these pubs are also wonderful buildings in their own right; many built using stone such as granite and sandstone - and often with nice features.

**"Think of the stonework on The Red Lion in Litherland, which as well as lions shows two 'Liver Birds' or the 'gothic' style of the sandstone 'Queens' in Knowsley Road. Sadly, we are losing many of our pubs for a variety of reasons. One reason is that a lot of big industry has gone locally, so pubs near former industrial areas don't get the custom they once had when lots of workers finished shifts."**

**CAMRA commissioned a study on the effects of pubs (Dunbar, 2016) and found that people who have a local pub to visit tend to be happier than those who do not.**

A limited alcohol intake improves wellbeing and some social skills, just as it has been shown to improve other cognitive abilities and health. These findings suggest that pubs in general - and local community pubs in particular - may have unseen social benefits.

**By Tom Duffy, Liverpool Echo 26th October 2016**



# Pubs Code investigations: 'Milestone' or 'dead end'?



**Paul Newby, the Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA), has hailed a major milestone for the tenanted pub sector with the publication of guidance on how he will conduct investigations<sup>i</sup>.**

The guidance<sup>ii</sup>, published on 2nd November 2016, sets out how he will decide whether to carry out an investigation and how he will run them. It also explains how he will decide whether to use his enforcement powers and the amount of any financial penalty.

*“This is an important document that demonstrates my commitment to be a force for fair agreement between tied pub tenants and the six largest pub-owning businesses,”*

says Newby. “Before publishing the guidance, I

carried out a wide consultation on my proposals, listened to what both tenants and pub-owning businesses had to say - and took the views of those who responded into account.

**“The final document makes clear that I will base any investigation on evidence - and that I will be as open as possible with the process. Parliament has given the PCA a number of ways to ensure compliance with the Code. These include arbitrating in disputes referred to the PCA by tied pub tenants and carrying out investigations.”**

The PCA may launch an investigation where he has reasonable grounds to suspect that there has been a breach of the Pubs Code - or where a pub-owning business has failed to follow an earlier PCA recommendation.

**The investigation and enforcement process runs like this:**

**1. Complaints can be made by anyone: pub tenants to rival pub companies and anyone who thinks the Pubs Code has been breached.**

2. When a complaint is received, the PCA will take account of: the impact of the

alleged breach; if an investigation will prevent further similar breaches; the benefits of an investigation; and if an investigation would be proportionate for the alleged breach, before opening an official investigation.

**3. Once an investigation into a complaint has been received, evidence will be called for. This evidence can come from anyone who might have information, knowledge or evidence that can aid the investigation. Similarly, the evidence could be any relevant document - such as a tenancy agreement, rent proposal or statement of the nature of a tie.**

4. At the end of each investigation, the PCA will publish a report of his findings, the action that is being taken - and the reason for that judgement being reached.

**5. If a penalty is going to be issued to a pub company, the severity of the penalty will take account of: whether the offender's behaviour will change; if any financial gain has been eliminated; how it would be relevant to the specific circumstances; how it would be proportionate; if it reverses harm; and if it deters future non-compliance. The penalty could range from a recommendation to the offending company, a request for documents to be published - or a penalty of up to 1% of annual turnover for the company.**

The Pubs Code only applies to Pub Companies that currently own 500 or more tied pubs in England and Wales. These are: **Marston's, Admiral Taverns, Enterprise Inns, Greene King (Including the Spirit Pub Company, part of GK), Star Pubs & Bars (Heineken UK) and Punch Taverns.**

Each of these companies runs between 1500 and 5000 pubs each. The people who run these companies are business-minded and they will have already examined the finer details of the Pub Code to see how they can work with it - or possibly - around it. This writer believes that some 'splitting' of PubCos will occur, maybe with the emergence of regional PubCo groups owned by a parent company. This could see some PubCos dropping below the 500-pub threshold. PubCos with fewer than 500 pubs can sign up to a Voluntary Pubs Code. Whether or not a company is

punished under the regulations appears to be at the discretion of the PCA himself. The five-point investigation process above contains many 'ifs', such as 'if an investigation will prevent further similar breaches' and 'if an investigation would be proportionate for the alleged breach'.

Should the wording have been strengthened to ensure an investigation takes place if a complaint is received? The penalties for breaching the regulations are also at the discretion of the PCA, with no guarantee that a company will be punished. Even the potential financial penalty against a company will only be 'up to 1%' of annual turnover.

It is not surprising that bodies such as the Parliamentary

Save the Pub Group - and the Government's own Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) Committee - have raised concerns about the effectiveness of the Pubs Code.

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

<sup>i</sup>Pubs code Adjudicator confirms how he will investigate pubcos. Liam Coleman, The Publican's Morning Advertiser, 3rd November 2016.

<sup>ii</sup>Consultation Summary of Responses, Investigation & Enforcement Guidance. Pubs Code Adjudicator, November 2016.

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)







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## MerseyAle needs YOU!

Did you know that every time an edition of MerseyAle is produced, 10,000 copies are printed?

As the new Distribution Manager, it is up to me to ensure that copies are spread widely, fairly and frequently to pubs and other sites within our branch area.

Whilst some copies are sent to Wirral, St Helens and Isle of Man, others are distributed in a number of ways. Firstly, certain city centre pubs act as Distribution Points (DP) and make copies available to anyone who wishes to take MerseyAle to other pubs whilst on their travels. **Current DP pubs include The Caledonia, The Crown and Ship & Mitre, though there are others.**

Secondly, some branch members have boxes delivered directly to their home/workplace, whilst

others collect directly from the printer for onward distribution. This network is successful in the main, but relies on only a handful of dedicated people to help maintain it. Sometimes it can be a struggle, as we don't always get to all the pubs as often as we would like - and consequently copies may go to waste, which is not what we want of course.

This is where *you* could be able to help, by offering to drop off a few copies to pubs that we struggle to visit regularly, due to where they are. Some are in and around the city centre, but the vast majority are in the suburbs - particularly to the south and east.

So, if *you* could offer to take some copies to pubs where you know they would be appreciated, please contact me on the email address below with the details. Of course, if you visit somewhere regularly where you *never* see MerseyAle, speak to staff first to make sure they are willing to take them - and also have somewhere the magazine can be displayed prominently. We can then provide you with an initial allocation and a CAMRA branded magazine holder, which should hold at least 10 copies at a time.

Any offers of help will be much appreciated.

Andre Fu

**Merseyale Distribution Manager**  
andre.fu@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

## Try before you buy

CAMRA promotes 'try before you buy'.

The aim of this is to encourage someone who might not normally drink a real ale to try one.

Some real ale drinkers seem to consider it a right to be able to have a taster. A publican can offer a taster in 'good faith' to help you choose a beer, but it should never be considered 'bad faith' should you not be offered one.

But does a regular drinker need to ask for a taster? I would say no.

Firstly, I argue that your palate cannot fully appreciate a good beer from just a quick taste. I have often found a beer can have an unusual taste to start with, but can be quite enjoyable with a good aftertaste by the end.

Secondly, do you need a taste of a Plum Porter? You should know the types you like, so do you really need a taste first? Often, the type of beer is obvious from the pump clip.

Thirdly, if in doubt, ask the bartender. You should be directed to a beer you like. Personally, I enjoy drinking all types of beer, perhaps some more than others. The fact there are so many styles, using different types of hops and malts, is what makes beer drinking so good. Normally, I deliberately pick a beer I am unfamiliar with, to widen my experience.

People should trust the cellerman to be serving good beer and take the plunge to buy a beer right away. The chances are that you will enjoy it.

By Tony Williams



# Beer event Czechs in to city hotel



Czech Trade Director, Martin Macourek and Czech Ambassador to the UK, Libor Sečka

The CzechTrade beer event rolled into Liverpool in late October, with MerseyAle and local CAMRA committee members in attendance, as well as the Czech Ambassador to the UK.

Mercure Liverpool Atlantic Tower Hotel hosted the event, with the Vista Restaurant and Vu Bar the venue for an evening of beer sampling, food and networking.

Labelled 'Czech Beer Day in the North', Czech Trade (or National Trade Promotion Agency of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic - to give them their full title) pulled out all the stops, laying on an eclectic range of beers across numerous stands.

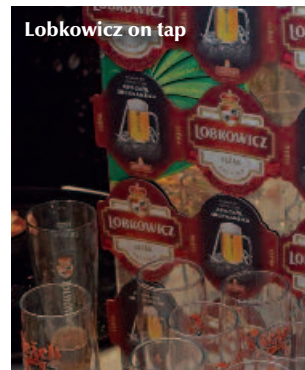
Their prime aim was to introduce Czech beers and breweries to UK regions outside of London, where such brands receive less



exposure than the beer menus of the capital. Also present were UK firms currently representing Czech breweries (Budweiser Budvar UK and Pivovar Ltd), as well as Czech breweries looking for UK partners – namely Lobkowicz and Herold. A regular visitor to the Czech

Republic, I first went back in 1996 and was struck by the passion for beer and the evidently positive attitude of local people to it. Notably, the Czechs consume more beer per capita than any other country on the planet. Whether hopping between atmospheric 'pivnices' in bohemian Zizkov – or having the Plato Scale explained to me by a brewer in charming Cesky Krumlov – I've always considered it one of life's pleasures to enjoy the differing beer styles of the Czech Republic in situ. Therefore, it was the next best thing to be able to sample closer to home, within view of the Liver Building and River Mersey.

A fresh, top-fermented **Lobkowicz Wheat Beer** (5%) kicked off proceedings, providing an agreeable fruit and spice flavour. Pivovary Lobkowicz Group comprises



seven regional breweries (all located in Bohemia and Moravia) and is the fourth largest Czech brewery group by domestic sales and fifth by overall production.

This was soon followed by a Belgian style draught **Bohemian Ale** by Bernard brewery, coming in at a whopping (but deceptive) 8.2%. Clean, malty and with a slight hint of coriander, this was very easy to drink – belying it's ABV – and made it one of my favourites of the evening.

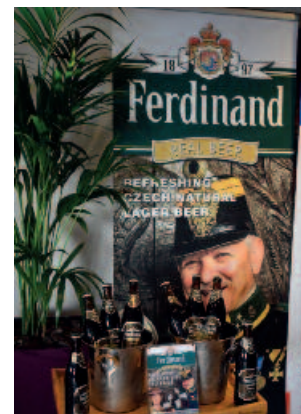
## Budweiser trademark

The Budweiser trademark dispute is well documented and always makes for interesting conversation – as it did when speaking to the enthusiastic representatives manning the Budweiser Budvar stand. Having visited the original brewery in Ceske Budejovice – and tasted unpasteurised Budvar at source – it was encouraging to learn that 'tank beer' (Tankove Pivo) is becoming increasingly available in UK outlets. One such outlet nearby is **The Viking Pub & Bakehouse** in West Kirby.

So it was that unfiltered, unpasteurised **Budvar Krausened** (4%) proved to be equally fresh-tasting on the night. Also an enjoyable drop was **Budvar Dark** (4.7%) – a full flavoured black beer with roasted coffee and chocolate tones.

A bottled **Cerna Hora Kvasar** (5.7%) came recommended by one of our friendly Czech hosts: a well-balanced beer with a distinctive honey taste,

it did not disappoint. Worthy mentions also to **Ferdinand Lezak Tmavy** (dark beer, 4.5%) and **Primator Weizenbier** (wheat beer, 5 %)



– both of which were consumed during the course of the evening.

The star of the show for me however was most definitely the bottled **Flying Cloud IPA** (5.5%) by Vysoky Chlumeč. An American style IPA made with Amarillo, Cascade and Saaz hops, it pours cloudy orange in colour, with a slight caramel, biscuit taste: one to enjoy again and again. Martin Macourek (Director of Czech Trade) later introduced



The Ambassador pours himself an unpasteurised Budvar Krausened

Ambassador Libor Sečka (Czech Ambassador to the UK), who in turn addressed the throng, before personally endorsing the individual exhibitors. It was certainly reassuring to see someone of such standing travelling from London to support an event of this kind.

Aside from the beer tasting and accompanying buffet, there was still time for prizes to be raffled and for personal introductions to the Ambassador himself, which rounded off a most enjoyable evening – courtesy of CzechTrade and participating partners.

By Dave MacBryde

- With thanks to Eva Provot for use of photos.
- For those interested in CzechTrade and similar events, please contact Martin Macourek (Director of Czech Trade) on martin.macourek@czechtrade.cz (0208 748 9010).
- For queries about Pivovary Lobkowicz Group (partnerships, distribution etc.), visit www.pivovary-lobkowicz.cz/en or contact Martin Scigel (Export Co-ordinator of PLG Group) on martin.scigel@pivovary-lobkowicz.cz (+ 420 538 765 218)



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# Cider Month Celebration



Liverpool CAMRA enjoy their bus trips as we all know - and in October, we headed to a brand-new destination.

Doug Macadam arranged a trip to Rosie's Cider Farm at Llandegla in North Wales, both as a thank you to Liverpool Beer Festival workers and as a branch celebration of 'October Cider Month'. It was extremely heartening to see many new faces amongst the thirty travellers - and it was soon clear that the chance to visit a real working cider farm appealed in particular to the cider drinkers.

We were met at the farm gate by the farmer and cider maker Steve Hughes, who has been making cider for twelve years. Steve is no stranger to Liverpool CAMRA members - and old friendships were quickly revived. We began with a walk through one of the orchards. Steve has 800 trees and 65 varieties of apple.

We learnt about the perils of farming fruit at 1,000 feet above sea level - and of the indiscriminate destruction the Welsh wind can do to trees, including fully uprooting them from the ground. We returned to the farmyard and viewed the massive steel storage tanks that - although



bought from a wine maker - are perfect for storing pressed apple juice.

Next, we were treated to a display of 'scratting', the process where whole apples are tipped into an ancient belt-driven threshing machine and reduced to a chunky pulp. In the next demonstration, that pulp was made into parcels wrapped in sacking



and then pressed in a giant screw press, until the pure juice runs out.



Steve Berks and Steve Hughes

At the end of the pressing, Steve returned with cider he'd made earlier. We were treated to four tubs of cider representing the Rosie's cider range from very dry to sweet. If the day couldn't get any better, suddenly several large platters of farm-made sandwiches unexpectedly appeared to complete the 'bread, cheese and cider experience'. It was the perfect way to celebrate Cider Month.

The only thing left to do, was for the Branch Cider Officer to present Steve with the 2016 Cider of the Festival certificate for his **Black Bart Sweet Cider**, which for the second time has won the prestigious top award (the first being in 2012).

With speeches and photos behind us, our final task was to visit the farm shop and buy some cider to take home. Well, it would have been rude not to!

By Steve Berks



# City Council to serve Late Night Levy

After a period of consultation, Liverpool City Council have decided to serve a Late Night Levy on bars serving alcohol after midnight from 1st April 2017. This is to provide extra money to cover street cleaning and extra policing. Here, two prominent local Councillors offer their differing opinions on the potential impact of the Late Night Levy.



## Why I'm backing the Late Night Levy

By Councillor Nick Small

Councillor for Central Ward Liverpool City Council

As one of the councillors representing Liverpool City Centre (where I live), I've seen first-hand the good, the bad and the ugly in the city's night-time economy.

On the whole, I think Liverpool has an enviable night-time economy offer. The City Centre is safe; we've got Purple Flag status awarded by the Association of Town and City Centre Managers - and tourism is booming. The city has a growing cask ale scene, with new micro-breweries popping up everywhere - and more people than ever it seems, are drinking good quality, locally produced beers.

**But Liverpool is also facing huge challenges. The City Council is staring massive cuts in the face. Between 2010 and 2020, Liverpool City Council will have lost 65% of its budget. Merseyside Police is facing deep cuts. Where in the past, the City Council could fund additional police for the night-time economy, it can no longer do so.**

The big concern I've got - shared by the police and the City Council - is how we will be able to cope and how can we maintain our night-time economy offer in the face of such cuts?

**The only answer is to do more with less - and to look at doing things differently. This is what the Late Night Levy is all about.**

Licensed premises across Liverpool - that are open between midnight and 6am - will pay a small levy on top of their business rates, to pay to police the night-time economy. 86% of businesses would pay around £6 a night - the cost of a cheap round of drinks. It's projected to bring in £452,000 a year, though this could go down if more premises than we think choose to vary their licences to close before midnight, to avoid paying the levy.

**The levy would be used by the police to bring more police into the night-time economy** - and by the City Council to improve licensing and street services. The Council has chosen to exempt premises in one of our two Business Improvement Districts (City Central and Commercial District), as these businesses already pay a levy on top of their rates. Our BIDs already do very good work supporting night-time economy initiatives.

But I think there will be another positive impact. It will incentivise premises to compete on quality, not on who can stay open longest. It will stop the race to the bottom. This will result in a better, more diverse night-time economy. Experience from Newcastle, for example, where a Late Night Levy was brought in a few years ago, is positive. No businesses have closed as a result of its introduction. I hope MerseyAle readers see the Levy as an opportunity to work with the police and City Council to improve Liverpool's night-time economy.



## Why I'm against the Late Night Levy

By Councillor Steve Radford

Leader of The Liberal Party Group

The city council recently set about reversing a previous decision NOT to implement a Late Night Levy.

The city council has - over months - spent a lot of money gathering the views of stakeholders

from restaurants, clubs, taxi-drivers, community groups and police. All 90 city councillors were canvassed, with 15 of the 90 replying. We then had a full and open debate at the Licensing Committee.

**Firstly, the case for a post-midnight levy was not justified, as the spike in crime took place at 3am and was little more than lost or stolen handbags**

**Secondly, Late Night Levies are to fund additional policing in areas of high crime. That is not the case in Liverpool, where we proudly have one of the safest city centres in the country.**

**The street alcohol ban, the phasing of closing times and extensive CCTV have contributed to this success.**

**Thirdly, businesses already contribute to additional policing with the Business Improvement District Levy.**

These key issues were discussed at Committee, with members who are trained to consider issues on a legal basis, with evidence-based decision making. The Committee then voted that there was no case for a Late Night Levy in Liverpool.

So, it was astonishing that at the council meeting, the recommendation of the Committee was frustrated with the pretence that another presentation was needed.

**Cllr Jennings - for The Greens - claimed that councillors had only seven days to consider the evidence presented to the Council. This is nonsense: Licensing Committee papers were made public weeks ago - and every councillor had an opportunity to participate in the initial consultation (for which only 15 of the 90 elected members did) and read or attend the consequential public committee meeting in the Town Hall.**

Cllr Munby, in private, said the purpose of the further presentation was to reverse the recommendation and bring in the levy. If that was the case, then why waste money on another presentation? Just be upfront about the desire for a levy.

Liverpool is one of the safest city centres in the country - and we don't need a Late Night Levy to deter businesses and employment.

## Statement taken from CAMRA website

The use of Late Night Levies is a threat to pubs, as it is an extra financial burden which could risk avoidable pub closures and restrict consumer choice.

The prescriptive format of the levy means that small community pubs will be adversely affected and may change their licensing hours to avoid paying the levy.



## Closing comment by Tony Williams Liverpool CAMRA

Most real ale drinkers will think that this Levy will not affect them. Indeed, I am unlikely to be drinking in Liverpool after midnight.

However, should I be away, I may wish to drink after midnight, so similarly tourists to Liverpool may wish to drink later. It would be a shame if only the venues selling mass-produced beers choose to open later.

The Roscoe (Knight/Roscoe Street) is a real ale pub that will be affected. I am sure this pub does not cause the police many problems - or that its customers add to the litter problem.

Similarly, there are outlets in the suburbs that will fall foul of this measure. An example of this is The Masonic in Garston. I doubt they would benefit in any way from paying the levy.

The rateable value of a venue should take into account the need to provide extra police or street cleaning in the first place.

Unfortunately, Liverpool City Council are being forced by the government to raise money in any way possible. We all know where the blame really lies.





# Bogged down in a Quagmire?... No, just a good night out!



Paul and Gordon

Imagine this: a local brewery is willing to provide a good range of beers...maybe a small buffet on the side to entice members of the local branch to come down and try their beers, possibly for the first time.

Well, this was the scenario presented to me as the Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO) for Big Bog Brewing Company in Speke, following an article I penned for the previous edition of MerseyAle.

Thus, a heady band of passionate real ale drinkers ventured to South Liverpool

on 19th October to taste the wares of yet another local microbrewery. Members were required to pre-register, with over 35 people trekking to Evans Road on the night. Some made their own way, but the vast majority caught the train to Hunts Cross Station, before making the mile or so walk to the trading estate where Big Bog is situated, to see what all the fuss is about.

As their BLO, I decided to get there a little beforehand; to help set up and then get behind the bar to deal with the initial rush, but ably

assisted by Brewer, Paul Jefferies and Sales Manager, Gordon Hurst. They generously laid on four beers, ranging from their Welsh Pale Ale (4%) through to the award-winning Quagmire (6%), thus covering most people's tastes. They then proceeded



Andre

to lay out a tremendous buffet, which included homemade bread.

After everyone had managed to get themselves a bite to eat, Paul gave a short talk about his time and experience as a brewer. This included currently being Head Brewer at Hyde's of Manchester, followed by a



potted history of Big Bog Brewery and why it was necessary to relocate the plant from Waunfawr, near Caernarvon, to Speke. Paul, Gordon and I then posed for the obligatory photos.

During the entire evening, there was the general hubbub of engaged conversation amongst the attendees, interspersed with the 'odd pint or three'. I don't think we managed to 'drink them dry', but some people certainly had a good try!

Since the article in the Autumn edition, things at the brewery have been progressing nicely. In

September, they released the second in the series of beers named after ghostly apparitions seen floating over bogs and marshes: Will O The Wisp (4.7%) is a



premium golden ale made with a selection of American hops in generous proportions.

In October, Paul was asked by a pub in Maghull to brew a German style beer which



Bogged down in beer! Bob, Frank and Mike

would debut at their October Beer Festival. He dutifully came up with Morast (German for quagmire or bog), using Vienna malt and two varieties of German



hops, producing a beer at 4.3% - of which they comfortably sold all 40 firkins.

To coincide with the winter nights, Paul has also decided to brew a porter called Peat Bog Porter, which will be made with a selection of roasted and peated malts and contain real licorice. The anticipated ABV will be 4.9% and Paul will have it available for the run-up to Christmas.

I think all those who attended the event will agree that a fantastic time was had - and it just leaves me to thank the guys for being such genial hosts. I know they plan to do at least one more Open Day before Christmas and will advertise it through social media.

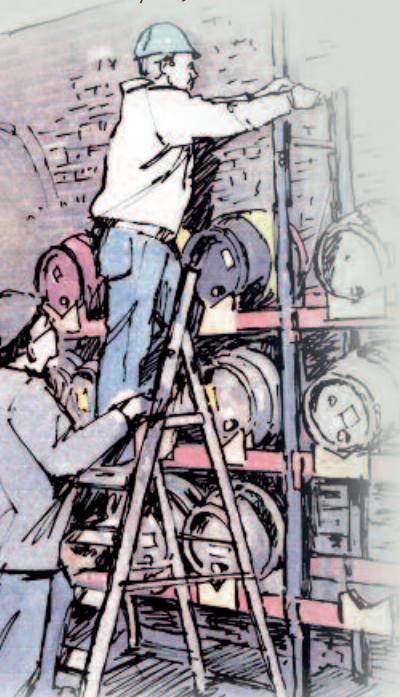
By Andre Fu  
Photographs reproduced by kind permission of Mel James-Henry and Joel Garnett.



# The Heroes of Liverpool Beer Festival

As we start preparations for next year's Beer Festival, I felt we should say a big THANK YOU to all those people who work behind the scenes to make the festival possible. Unlike many other beer festivals, ours is run ENTIRELY by volunteers. From the booking of the venue to the dismantling of the stillage, there is a team of people who give up their time to ensure the festival runs smoothly.

Sketch by DW Jones



The planning process begins around the end of August, with the first meeting of the Beer Festival Planning team. At this stage the dates for the festival are confirmed, so that the venue can be booked. We also plan our festival budget and begin contacting potential sponsors. The Beer Festival Planning Team consists of the people who will take charge of running the event, such as the Beer Festival Organiser, Treasurer, Procurement Officer, Staffing Officer and the Bar Managers. Meetings are then held each month to discuss progress - and to agree on all aspects of the festival, from ticket sale dates down to the hiring of the portaloos! Of course, the most important ingredient for any successful beer festival is the beer - and our team of beer orderers work tirelessly to source the best beers from all over the UK. As the festival draws near, the hard work begins. Beer starts to arrive on the Saturday prior to the start of the festival - and we have a



Photo Mel James-Henry



team of volunteers who help build the stillage and unload the barrels. To ensure the beers are in the right order, a stillage plan is designed and we have someone on hand to organise the barrels. As you can imagine, it can get a little chaotic at times. We are always looking for help with setting up the festival, so if you can give up your Saturday morning to help with the unloading of the barrels, please contact me at the email address at the foot of this article.

merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



Photo DW Jones

From then until the festival opens its doors, there is always a small team on hand to accept deliveries and prepare the venue to receive the hundreds of visitors we get through the door each day. Whilst the Festival is on, we have around 150 volunteers each session - who not only

serve the beer, but also help with keeping the venue clean and tidy. There is a great sense of comradery amongst the volunteers who help at the festival. It provides an opportunity to meet other CAMRA members and promote real ale, as well as sampling our great beers of course. Once the festival ends, there is still more work to be done. A small group of us return to the Crypt on Sunday to dismantle the stillage and clean the hall, whilst brewers come to collect the empty casks and everything is then put away for another year. One final task I must do as

Staffing Officer is organise the 'Thank You' trips. There is normally a choice of two free trips each year - one of which is to the brewery whose beer has been named 'Beer of the Festival'. This year, we made trips to Red Star Brewery (winners of our 'Beer of the Festival' Award), Foxfield and Rosie's Cider Farm (winners of the 'Cider of the Festival'). So, if you have never volunteered to work at the festival, why not give it a go? It's a great way to experience the festival, meet new people and fly the flag for real ale, but above all it is good fun!

**Sonia James-Henry**  
Liverpool Beer Festival  
Staffing Manager

To volunteer to work at this year's festival, please contact me at: [staffing@liverpoolbeerfest.org.uk](mailto:staffing@liverpoolbeerfest.org.uk)  
Volunteers must be CAMRA members.



Photo DW Jones



Photo Mel James-Henry

merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



# SHOPS OVERTAKE PUBS IN THE SALE OF BEER

**For the first time ever, shops are selling more beer than pubs and bars. The on-trade sold less beer than supermarkets and convenience stores for the first time on record last year (2015).**

Statistics from the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) indicate that we are buying more beer in supermarkets and off-licenses than we do in pubs. This shows a dramatic change in consumer behaviour since the BBPA started collecting sales data in 1980.

In 1980, sales in pubs dominated the beer market. Pubs sold 87.7% of all beer consumed - and the figure for pubs was still a large 79.6% in 1990. But since then, the availability of cheap alcohol in supermarkets and off-licenses has increased dramatically and, this year, off-trade sales account for 51% of all beer consumed in the UK.

Since 2000, there has been an increasing shift towards drinking in the home, with on-trade sales dropping from 67.6% in 2000 to 51.9% in 2010. Since then the drop has been less marked, with the level fluctuating between 50-55% in 2011, but was 50%-50% in 2014. However, 2015 was the first year the off-trade had a majority. Brigid Simmonds, Chief Executive of the BBPA, said in September at the publication of the BBPA's

"Statistical Handbook 2015" that "the UK's high duty rate on beer is still a cause for concern. We will continue to work with the Government to bring our rate more in line with other European nations and help better support our industry".

## **UK beer duty**

UK beer duty is 54% higher than it was in 2000, despite recent cuts to the duty rate and the abolition of the Beer Duty Escalator in 2013. The BBPA says that their data shows much more work needs to be done to cut beer duty in the UK, with the UK rate still a staggering 14 times that of Germany. Overall UK consumption is 67.7 litres (119 pints) per head, per year; below the EU average of around 72 litres. Germans drink 107 litres per head, per year, while those in the Czech Republic get through 144 litres per year.

People choose to buy alcohol from supermarkets rather than pubs because it is cheaper to buy than beer sold in pubs. Why?

Even though the Beer Duty Escalator was abolished in 2013, prices still seem to rise. Between 2012 and 2016 the cost of beer sold in pubs rose by 2.0%. In the same period the cost of beer sold in shops fell by 2.6% (-2.6). The BBPA puts the blame on our current duty laws and on taxes other than beer duty. They blame differences in VAT.

In a report in The Publican's Morning Advertiser (March 2016), they note that pubs which are food-led have to pay an extra 20% tax, whereas food in shops is mostly exempt. Brigid Simmonds says: "Is it right that a supermarket meal carries no VAT, but the same meal in a pub does?" Not all the pubs we visit sell food, but it is an increasingly attractive way of generating custom and income which helps many pubs survive. Retailers need to adopt pricing policies that rebalance the gap between on - and off- sales. Supermarkets need to stop selling alcohol as a 'loss-leader', where beer is sold cheaper than its wholesale price and the shortfall in income is recouped through other sales. If supermarkets and off-license chains will not do this, then perhaps we need to ask the government to legislate that off-sale prices don't unfairly impact on pub prices. If any of our elected representatives are reading this, perhaps you would like to raise the issue in Parliament for us and help our local pubs to survive.

By Tony Morgan

*Analysis: Are supermarkets killing pubs? The Publican's Morning Advertiser. 3rd March 2016.*

BBPA Statistical Handbook 2015. British Beer and Pub Association. <http://www.beerandpub.com/shop/statistics>

# 2017 Liverpool Beer Festival



**Every year, we make some tweaks to how we sell tickets for the beer festival. This year, there are some fairly substantial changes, which are detailed in the points below.**

- 1. We have reintroduced a Wednesday evening session. This will only have about 50 of the most popular beers on sale. It is first come, first served and pay on the door. No advance ticket sales.**
- 2. We have scrapped the ticket selling day. This was becoming less popular and not worth the effort we had to put into it. This year, the only way to buy tickets is on the Internet.**
- 3. For similar reasons, we have scrapped the allocation of tickets to volunteers at the festival. We expect volunteers to qualify for advance ticket sales, which leads in to point number 4.**
- 4. We are extending the advance ticket sales to members of Southport & West Lancs, St Helens, Halton and Wirral branches. If you belong to one of these branches, you will receive details of how to apply for these tickets.**
- 5. We have increased ticket prices for all sessions by £1, but this now includes the booking fee. This means tickets are slightly cheaper than last year. From now on, what you see is what you pay. We have no desire to get a reputation as the Ryanair of beer festivals.**

Martin Powell  
Admissions Manager  
Liverpool Beer Festival 2017









“ ...the outstanding feature was the staff. What a great crew. ”  
 They made our experience so enjoyable. I want to send them out to other places to show how it should be done. I definitely want a return visit.

- Trip Advisor review

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The Red Fox, Liverpool Rd, Thornton Hough, Wirral, Merseyside, CH64 7TL



## Rob Carter meets Dave Swift from The Red Fox

The Red Fox in Thornton Hough is a large sandstone building, thought to have been commissioned by Lord Leverhulme around 1890. Sitting in its own extensive and impressive grounds, it was acquired in 2014 by the Brunning & Price restaurant group, who gave it a serious makeover. It is a far cry from its former incarnation as the Grange nightclub I remember from my youth!

It now serves quality food, complemented by seven hand pumps, serving a good range of well-kept real ales (there is always a dark beer on), eight real ciders, plus a wide range of spirits, wines and lagers. It sits neatly on the 487 bus route, with a bus stop conveniently at the end of the drive.

It's often very busy and the atmosphere is welcoming and personal. Brunning & Price run their pubs as free houses, owned by their managers, whilst the head office functions as a service to support them. What this means in practice is

that the pubs choose their own staff, write their own menus, choose their own beers and wines line-ups (and how much to sell them for) and generally operate autonomously.

The man charged with choosing most of the beer on offer at The Red Fox - and making sure it is served in good condition - is Dave Swift. Known to all as 'Swifty', Deputy Manager, Cellar Keeper and all-round beer enthusiast, he very kindly agreed to have a chat with me about his job and all things beer.

### RC: How did you get into the industry?

DS: Just by chance really. I worked for five years in an office for HBOS, but it didn't really fit me. I used to work part time in my local and had a friend who had set up a pub. I'd done a bit of travelling, lived in Canada for a year and got back to England and didn't really have anything on. He said "Come and do some shifts here while you find your feet", while I was looking for a 'proper job'. After about two weeks, he said "You don't need to find another job: this is what you need to do."

So, I was working for him in



Chester, then ended up running a few bars and pubs there, before falling into the arms of Brunning & Price about four years ago. I joined The Architect (another Brunning & Price pub in Chester) and then came up here two years ago.

### RC: How long have you worked in the industry and how much has it changed in that time?

DS: Ten years - and it has indeed changed. I didn't think it would do and I'm still relatively new to it compared to old-school landlords. There's been the smoking ban - and back then food in pubs wasn't a particularly big thing. Now there's no smoking and food is a massive pull for people. There has been a transition in

drinking habits and the beer is a lot different. The beer styles have shifted as to what people are drinking: there's a lot more blonde and pale beers. Lager drinkers are moving onto drinking cask, which is great. I think there's less of a stigma about drinking real ale now.





People used to see it as a bit of an old boys' drink, whereas now there are a lot of young people drinking it. There are also a lot of (what would have been) lager drinkers drinking it, as well as women. My wife drinks it with me sometimes if we go out. There has definitely been a shift, but I think it's for the better. There are also a lot more breweries, but I think it's a fine line really.

**RC: There are a lot more breweries these days.**

DS: Obviously, you have a lot of pubs shutting, but then more breweries are opening, so I think it's getting to the point now where it is hard for new breweries to establish themselves. The amount of calls I get from breweries trying to sell me beer! You can't always please everybody, but in a way, that's good - it's friendly competition.

Pubs opening near here is good for us, as it keeps us on our toes. You want more pubs in an area, because it creates a good atmosphere, it's beneficial for the area, so it's good to have a lot of breweries. However, I think from the breweries' side of things, we are starting to hit a saturation point. It's going to be harder for the smaller breweries - who I like to support - but brewers that operate nationally are always going to be able to sell their beer. Smaller breweries that rely on selling 25-30 barrels a week to survive are competing with each other - and also against larger breweries, who before they even pick up the phone on

a Monday morning have sold several thousand barrels. It's the smaller ones that I think will end up struggling. They've got their work cut out really.



**Nothing comes out of the cellar without me checking it out of the barrel first to make sure it's OK**

**RC: You're given a lot of independence by Brunning & Price. How do you go about choosing your beers to put on in the pub?**

DS: I've been doing it for a while, so have built up a relationship with breweries over the last nine or ten years. I try and give new breweries a chance if I can. Also, local is my

thing; I don't really want to buy beer from more than forty miles away, because I don't feel you need to - as there are so many breweries in that range.

When I was in Chester, I generally bought from Chester, North Wales and Shropshire. Since moving twenty miles here, I've tried to deviate from some of the breweries I used previously - and move instead towards those local to where I am now. For example, before I came here, I'd never used the likes of Neptune, Stamps or Liverpool Craft.

It's also an element of people who are nice to deal with and who aren't too pushy. Price is a bit of a factor, but we're all in it together, so I try not to discount breweries on what they charge, as it might just roll onto what we have to charge in the pub.

**RC: What do you think is the secret of a perfect pint?**

DS: I think that's quite an open question, as people have different perceptions of their perfect pint.

For example, if you're in the north, you'll want a centimetre and a half of big creamy head, whereas when I was at GBBF (Great British Beer Festival) in London, nobody wanted a sparkler: everyone wanted a flat pint.

On paper, you'd say it's got to be clear and the clarity has to be fine, but you're not going to get that with an unfiltered beer, although the taste could still be

good. As long as the beer is as it's supposed to be and it tastes good, then that's fine with me. I'll never sell anything that I wouldn't drink myself.

It's like the kitchen: no food goes out without the chef passing it. Nothing comes out of the cellar without me checking it out of the barrel first to make sure it's OK. If it isn't, I'll take it off and either leave it to settle and try it the next day or send it back. I think a perfect pint is down to the perception of the drinker at the end of the day.

**RC: What is your favourite beer?**

DS: I think it's shifted a little bit. I used to be into my malty, amber and copper coloured beers; quite sweet with a caramel taste to them. Now I like the American style pale ales. There are a lot of good ones about. I quite like beers that are under 3.8% ABV - both in terms of taste and interest.

It's easy to make a 5% ABV beer and smack loads of hops in, but I like the skill in a weak beer with a lot of flavour. Also, a lot of my customers are driving here, so they want a beer they can comfortably have a pint and a half of - and not be worried about it. Also, if you put a milk stout in front of me, I would never say no. That's my favourite style I think.

To pinpoint my favourite beer is difficult though. Dunham Massey Brewery did a brilliant Milk Stout, but it's very hard to get hold of. There is an American brewery called Left Hand Brewing, who do a Milk

Stout that is fantastic. I think it's the lactose that makes it nice and creamy. I know that was a bit indecisive, but it's a hard one!

**RC: How do you think CAMRA can best support pubs like yours?**

DS: I guess in terms of support, it is marketing. If people write into CAMRA magazines saying they had a beer in the pub, people might not have heard of it - and will then give it a try. Luckily, the local CAMRA guys seem to quite like the pub and have a few socials and meetings here. They come in to drink quite regularly and that's nice.

It helps create that pub atmosphere that we try to achieve. We're seen as a restaurant by a lot of people, but we're a pub at heart. So, we get good trade from CAMRA members - and the positive word of mouth they spread about us is also beneficial.

**RC: Finally, do you still like going to the pub yourself?**

DS: Yes, but it's a funny one. If I go into a pub, I'm always looking around, thinking "Ooh, where's that beer from?", "How much did they have to pay for that?" or taking photos of beers I'd like to get in.

I still like going to the pub, but I don't get to go as much, because I work a lot at night and I've got a family at home, so it's a bit tricky to get out as much as I'd like to. Technically though, I come to

the pub most days, because I'm working and I like what I do: it's a social job.

You're chatting to the locals while they're having a beer. It's just that they have a beer and I haven't a lot of the time. Certainly, I still like going to the pub, but part of me is always 'on duty' so to speak - as I'm thinking about my pub - but I wouldn't have it any other way.

**A big thanks to Swifty for taking the time to speak to me. You can often find him behind the bar at The Red Fox - and me the other side of it, drinking. See you there!**

By Rob Carter

The Red Fox, Liverpool Rd, Thornton Hough, Wirral, Merseyside, CH64 7TL  
[www.brunningandprice.co.uk/redfox/](http://www.brunningandprice.co.uk/redfox/)  
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# Wirral Branch News

## Elland Brewery and Huddersfield visit

The 2016 CAMRA Wirral Birkenhead Beer Festival found a new home this summer at Prenton Park, home of Tranmere Rovers Football Club. Festival goers selected **Elland 1872 Porter** as their Champion Beer of The Festival. This multi-award winning dark ale has won many awards, including being voted Supreme Champion at the Great British Beer Festival. Elland brewery is a long-established microbrewery based in Elland, West Yorkshire, just outside of Huddersfield. No more than 90 minutes from Merseyside, it seemed an ideal choice for a CAMRA Wirral coach trip. So, in early October, a full coach of CAMRA members set off for the brewery.

On arrival, we were warmly welcomed by brewery manager, **Mike Hiscock**, who had prepared several delicious brews for us to enjoy. On hand pump were; **Beyond The Pale** - a crisp, dry pale ale; **Fireball** - a copper coloured ale with biscuity notes; and the wonderful **White Prussian** - a very complex moreish ale with a dry finish. Several other ales were also available in small

barrels, including **1872 Porter** and **Nettle Thrasher**.

Mike then gave a short talk about the brewery and introduced us to **Managing Director, Stephen Francis**. Then it was time for **Gareth Owen**, Birkenhead Beer Festival

Organiser, to present the Beer of The Festival award, which was gratefully received by both Mike and Stephen. After a couple of hours at the brewery, it was time to peruse the excellent pubs of Huddersfield. Huddersfield has, given its size, a remarkable variety of outstanding pubs serving a wide range of cask ales. Three different breweries - **Mallinsons, Rat, and Magic Rock** - all have brewery taps within the town.

Darryl Short, Wirral Branch committee member, kindly supplied annotated maps showing all the best pubs. With such a choice of interesting pubs, inevitably everyone chose a different route around them.

Yours truly decided to visit first the newly opened Mallinsons brewery tap, 'The Corner'. A very modern bar with a lot of cask ales, it was slightly disappointing to find



Stephen, Mike and Gareth

very few Mallinsons beers available on the day. Continuing, many of our party had converged at **The Grove** - a mecca for beer lovers - where there is always a large range of interesting cask ales, ciders and perries.

Next on our route was the **Rat Brewery's Rat** and **Ratchet** pub, featuring the full range of the estimable Rat ales. Finally, to **The Star**, with another different range of cask ales for us to try. It was then, sadly, time for us to leave this excellent beer town and head for home.

By Dave Hutchinson  
Social Secretary, Wirral CAMRA

**This event was a sell-out and Wirral CAMRA will be running trips in the future. Keep an eye on our website for details of future trips and events [www.wirral.camra.org.uk](http://www.wirral.camra.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter @WirralCAMRA**

## Stanley's Cask

Stanley's Cask is a friendly, one-room local that welcomes visitors, situated at 212 Rake Lane on the outskirts of New Brighton. The landlady, Avril, has been in charge since 2008 and has managed to keep it in the Good Beer Guide every year since 2009.

She was previously at The Clarence in New Brighton for more than 20 years and undoubtedly knows and satisfies the local cask ale market, as confirmed by the Cask Marque accreditation for quality.

A local history website states that the pub was built in 1825 and has previously been called The Nag's Head, as well as McCulloch's, prior to the current name. There are two outside areas: a small area to the front, popular on summer evenings - and a beer garden to the rear, with a heated, covered smoking area.

Stanley's Cask is known for its Sports TV and Live Music; the many strategically placed screens show most major sporting events on Sky and BT. They also have a darts team in the local league, a football team - and are even planning for a golf society.

The regular live music is provided by resident Tuesday night Folk/Irish band, Reckless Elbow.



The Friday, Saturday and Sunday music is more Rock and Blues orientated bands. Thursday is Quiz Night and includes a game of Scottish Bingo (whatever that is!).

An annual Cancer Charity all-day music fundraiser is being held in January. Last year's event had 18 acts - and staff donated their tips, to help raise over £3500 for Clatterbridge Hospital. Next year's event is on Sunday 29th January.

**Stanley's Cask is CAMRA's Wirral Branch Pub of The Season (POTS) for Autumn 2016**, having won the Spring POTS in 2013. If you want to get there from Liverpool, get the 433 or 432 buses from the city centre, which stop nearby. It is also on the number 410 bus route, which covers much of the Wirral on its route from Clatterbridge to New Brighton, via Bromborough and Birkenhead.

By Tim Smith

### A Campaign of Two Halves

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01/15

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## The Lion - Recumbent no more!

new ventures and given the old street a sense of optimism.

On 26th September,

what was The Caledonia (a former Burtonwood pub - as remembered by some of our older readers) was relaunched as The Lion. This new freehouse is a very welcome addition to the Birkenhead real ale scene, which for too long has had to rely on The Stork, Gallaghers and a couple of Wetherspoon pubs.

The Lion's new owners, Sean and Michael, are well experienced in looking after real ale, having until recently run The Lion and The Cross Keys pubs in Liverpool city centre. A disagreement with their pub

company led these two gentlemen to move across the water and open The Lion as a straightforward, traditional pub with a tasteful and bright interior.

Behind the well-refurbished bar are four handpumps; one serving a permanent house beer from George Wright - The Lion Returns - and three other rotating guest ales. All beers are priced competitively and the owners encourage lunchtime imbibers to take in their own food from the several butty shops in the area, whilst enjoying a pint. In common with its previous city incarnation, tasty pork pies are also available throughout the day.

We wish Sean and Michael all the very best in their latest endeavour.

all no longer selling real ale.  
Saddle (Wallasey) - now selling real ale again (Doom Bar).  
New licensees due in Lady Hamilton (Neston) and Travellers Rest (Bebington).  
Jug & Bottle (Heswall) closing on 24th October until mid-December for refurbishment.

## Market Street in Birkenhead is looking up!

Only a few short months ago, it was the poster boy for a long and hard recession. Typified by its closed shops and abandoned pubs - and with a general air of gloom and despondency - it seemed that nothing would change. Yet, despite the conversion to flats of the Crown & Cushion and the delicensing of The Copperfield, many of the once-closed businesses (and one of its public houses) have reopened as

## Wirral CAMRA Significant Pub and Brewery News

The Lion opened on Market St, Birkenhead, serving four real ales.  
Brambles / Oyster Catcher (Leasowe) - closed.  
Exchange (Heswall), Lake (Hoylake) Wirral Liberal Club (Prenton), Greenland Fishery (Neston) and Cock and Donkey (Birkenhead) -



## Brewing and bottling Liverpool's rebellious spirit

Tony Morgan interviews Tony Rothwell of the Republic of Liverpool Beer Company

TM: Tony - can you tell us the reason why you started the Republic of Liverpool Beer Company?



TR: The main ideas behind the Republic of Liverpool Beer Company were to brew some quality beers - and to use these as a means of making some statements about Liverpool as a rebellious, somewhat anti-establishment city - possibly the last such city in the UK. As the late Margaret Simey, politician and activist said: "The magic of Liverpool is that it isn't England".

TM: So, can we expect beers with a local theme or statement? Your first beer name has a particular message. Can you give us some background to it?

TR: The first beer was launched in the Ship and Mitre

pub in Liverpool at the end of October. We named it 'Northern Powerhouse...My Arse'. This is a comment on the nonsense spoken by George Osborne et al, in suggesting that this government is making an effort to lessen the obscene gulf in wealth between the north of Britain and the south - especially London.

A recent example of the bias shown towards London and the South East is - I believe - the proposed runway expansion of Heathrow airport. To state that "this will benefit the whole of the country, with 77,000 jobs being created locally" is totally misinforming. I didn't know that Newcastle was local to London. I am sure Geordies and people from other northern cities are ecstatic about all those new jobs being created near Heathrow!

We get fed this information all the time - and it seems to us that a local pub, with a few pints of beer is a great place to start discussing this with friends and customers. Of course, the conversation about the North-South divide and other such politics wouldn't last too long without a good beer to get everyone talking.

TM: That leads us nicely to the beer itself. What kind of beer is it?

TR: 'Northern Powerhouse... My Arse!' is available in limited supply as a cask beer. It is a hoppy, fruity IPA, made using a blend of

Centennial, Cascade, Ahtanum and Simcoe hops.

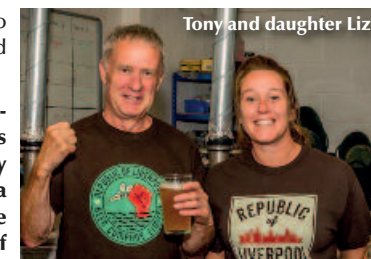
It's on sale in several pubs locally (but unfortunately not in Newcastle!). Northern Powerhouse is also available in bottles - lightly carbonated - from Ship in a Bottle on Whitechapel in Liverpool City Centre. You can also buy these bottles - and Republic of Liverpool Beer Co T-shirts - online from our website: [www.therepublicofliverpool.com](http://www.therepublicofliverpool.com)

TM: You are involved with Stamps Brewery. Is this venture a new brewery - and what are your plans for the next beers you hope to produce? Will you continue the campaigning theme?

TR: The Republic of Liverpool Beer Co is linked to Stamps Brewery, who will brew the beers. We intend to produce at least two more beers - one more before Christmas.

At present, these remain a secret, but keep checking out news on the website and Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/TheRepublicofLiverpool/](http://www.facebook.com/TheRepublicofLiverpool/)

The Republic of Liverpool Beer Co Ltd - brewing and bottling Liverpool's rebellious spirit!





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# ManxAle

From Dave Halliwell MerseyAle Isle of Man Correspondent

This quarter, we focus on community, where substantial efforts have been made to retain two of the island's pub venues - both in very different circumstances.

There is a return to tenure for the longest-serving licensee on the island, Roy Kilgallon, along with a

news roundup highlighting yet more beer awards for the island's brewers. There is also news of a Douglas pub being recognised as having an Interior of Regional Significance and Importance by the Pub Heritage Group.

## Pulrose community say no to local pub closure



It was reported in the Autumn MerseyAle that The Pinewood - a Heron & Brearley (H&B) pub in the outer Douglas area of Pulrose - had closed on July 6th.

In a fantastic display of community spirit, the closely-knit Pulrose community has since banded together and MerseyAle is delighted to report that the venue has returned in the form of a social club, with an initial five-year

lease. Opened on 29th October, The Pinewood (which opens 3.30pm-11pm Monday to Thursday and noon-midnight at weekends) has been given a makeover, with the inside of the pub being repainted during the closure.

Membership of the club is currently at very competitive rates annually, with a discount for pensioners and provision for guest members on a limited basis - as with the majority of clubs. The aim of the club is to retain a community venue at the heart of the Pulrose community - and not just a pub. As such, the club will be available for everyone in the community to use, from private

functions to coffee mornings. It can also be used for children's and teenager's events, as well as the traditional pub function for adults.

The club has a capacity of 150 for such function events. For MerseyAle readers, on the bar side I am delighted to report that cask ale has been retained. On the opening night, **Okell's Bitter** was available as before. Note here though that the club is not tied to any one beer



provider - and prices in keeping with the majority of social clubs have been reduced, with the bitter being £2.80 at the time of opening: very competitive for the Isle of Man.



# MARINE HOTEL

SHORE ROAD PEEL  
TEL 01624 842337



Welcome to the Marine Hotel with an extensive range of real ale, real cider and great food



We continually stock Okell's bitter and rotate other guest ales from both local and external Brewers including Bushy's and Hooded Ram



The Marine has an extensive home cooked menu sourcing locally produced fresh meat, fish and vegetables.



Opening hours are Monday to Saturday noon until 9pm for food and noon until 5pm on a Sunday. We open noon until midnight for drinks Monday to Sunday inclusive

Expansive views of Peel bay, harbour and Castle



The Pinewood has had a long history serving the community of Pulrose. The lease of the building - originally on the site of a youth club many years ago - has provision in it to be retained as a community facility. One point of interest is the bar area, which was once part of the bar from the historic **Waterloo pub** (now closed) that many will remember from Strand Street, Douglas.

## Glen Mona Hotel reopens



In a second piece of excellent pub community news, The Glen Mona (at Glen Mona, between Ramsey and Laxey on the coast road) has reopened quietly in early November, following a very substantial makeover. After being shut for almost a year, it became apparent over the summer period that a full refurbishment was under way.

The results are very impressive - and the interior of the pub, which had become run down - has been completely renewed, to the extent where comparisons with the past cannot be made. This is effectively a brand-new pub internally.

In a very intelligent way, The Glen Mona, in the heart of the



rural Manx countryside, now caters for many different types of clientele - essential in these times of changing patterns of pub use.

There are much sought after holiday accommodation suites - and food is now being served again, with dining available either in the downstairs section or the extensive upstairs floor, complete with separate bar.

Downstairs, games facilities for pool and darts remain to the left of the main bar area as before, but the whole ambience and style of the ground floor has been changed. It now features a comfortable rear



lounge area, along with tables and chairs and a cosy real fire for the winter months.

Functions for up to sixty or more are already being catered for and live music is planned in the future. The food offering will include breakfast for those staying overnight, along with lunches, evening dining and afternoon teas, along with traditional Sunday lunches of course. By using and designing the pub in these various ways, The Glen Mona now has the capacity to attract many more



types of clientele, from locals to tourists, to visitors from nearby towns alike.

Note the pub is on a main bus route and near to the Manx Electric Railway Glen Mona stop. As with The Pinewood, most importantly for the real ale fan, cask has been retained. Although **Okell's Bitter and Okell's IPA** were available at the time of visiting, the designated official, Kamille Yardley-Scott, indicated that the pub was independently owned and not tied to any one provider.

Bottles of **Hooded Ram** beers and **Bushy's beers** were also available on the bar at the time of visit. It is intended that the





**Bushy's**  
**BRAND**  
 "ALWAYS IN THE LEAD!"

**PURE BY LAW** **DOUGLAS ISLE OF MAN**

**MANX ALES**

**1st AT THE T.T.**

"ASK FOR THEM BY NAME"  
 www.bushys.com

pub will be open throughout the day. In challenging times for the pub sector, it is fantastic news to see such a high level of investment in the Glen Mona area - and the new owners have set their stall out impressively in this well-known hotel, originally built in the 1800s.

**Roy of The Royal**

Roy Kilgallon - a long-serving licensee with **Okell's**, who has been in the trade for 43 years - has taken over The Royal in Peel and bought the property from Heron & Brearley. Immediately, Roy - a long time real ale fan - has commissioned four hand pumps and the pub is now a free house.

At the time of visit, two cask ales from **Okell's** were available, along with **Marston's Pedigree** and **Bushy's Ruby Mild**. Conveniently situated near the main bus stop interchange for Peel - and the Centenary Centre, a much-used community facility - The Royal is a very convenient starting or end point for an evening in



Peel. It is open all day weekends and from 3pm to midnight during the week. The Royal is a cosy, yet unusually shaped pub, with the bar set back right at the

rear of the building, almost a bowling alley length away from the front door. There is also an extensive outside garden area to the rear - often missed by many - and a games



room, with free jukebox on Sundays.

Having lost none of his enthusiasm for the trade, Roy intends to introduce food at the venue over time. Already, in an excellent sign for the cask ale drinker, he has expressed unhappiness at only having four hand pumps!

It is also very important to note here, that both The Royal and The Pinewood have reported very robust cooperation for both projects from outgoing Heron & Brearley, who have extensively assisted in both transitions. H&B need to be applauded for this community-spirited approach to the new ventures they are no longer involved in.

**News in brief**

Two local breweries have once again triumphed in the 2016 World beer awards.



Firstly, **Okell's Aile** has once again won a gold medal in

the 2016 awards in the flavoured smoked beer category.

Not to be outdone, the now established Hooded Ram brewery has won two gold awards also; one for **Pacifica Cascadian Dark Ale** - described as a Black IPA - and one for the Hooded Ram **Amber Best Bitter**. **Okell's Aile** in particular has been a prolific award winner over recent years, but in a now crowded and competitive market, the island's brewers are performing well in these competitions.



**Isle of Man Beer Festival 2017**  
 After a delay in negotiations, MerseyAle is delighted to confirm that the CAMRA Isle of Man Beer Festival 2017 will return to the Royal Hall in The Villa Marina - the island's premier venue of its type.

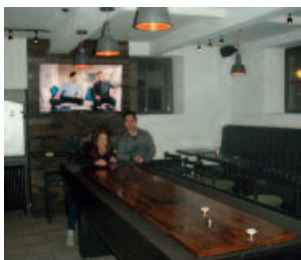


The event will take place between Thursday April 6th and Saturday April 8th (the weekend before Easter).





Once again, following on from another highly successful Food and Drink Festival supported by CAMRA Isle of Man and all sectors of the industry on island, the CAMRA festival will showcase real ales and ciders from the Isle of Man and beyond. Further details will follow on social media and in MerseyAle, as plans for the festival develop.



Asian cuisine to complement the drinks offering.

**Finally, in this era of rapid and innovative change in the brewing industry and pub scene, it is reassuring and important to see tradition holding its own in the modern world.**

Meanwhile in mid-October, for the first time in the south of the island, there was a unique collaboration to promote the inaugural **Great Two Ports Beer Festival**, between October 13th and 16th in Port Erin and Port St. Mary. All seven pubs in the two towns participated, with a celebration of real ale and live music across all the free houses and managed estate pubs - thought to be an island first, cooperation wise.

Firstly, **The Albert** - in Douglas - has been recognised as having a pub interior of Historic



Regional Heritage, Interest and Importance. While this status is rarely awarded, the mahogany panelling and seating areas of The Albert have been particularly noted. While traditional and typical of pub refits in the 1960s, visitors will

Over thirty real ales were available across the broad range of pubs. While such events in England are common, they have regrettably not been on island to date. The inclusive level of cooperation from all involved - for the good of the two towns - is to be much congratulated. It is to be hoped that momentum for repeat annual events can be maintained.

**Hooded Ram** at Clinch's on Douglas North Quay now features a particularly fine shuffleboard - by way of traditional games - and has very recently started serving



note that the pub is nevertheless decorated to a high standard throughout in this traditional format. It is also worth noting that the working vaulted stone cellar areas date from the 1750s - and are thought to be some of the oldest man-made structures surviving in Douglas.

Secondly, to **Okell's bitter**: quietly and almost unnoticed, the great real ale survivor on island is still to be found in all but a handful of the island's pubs. Despite being a session bitter coming in at 3.7% - in an era when ales have become consistently stronger - Okell's Bitter is to be found on the bar in all the large free houses (not just the managed estate pubs of H&B).

It consistently holds its own against the plethora of innovative, highly flavoured and heavily marketed brews of the modern age. Okell's remains the island's most popular brew - and is photographed here at The



Rosemount, Douglas, where the brew this last eighteen months has invariably been found to be on immaculate form.

By David Halliwell



## Three Piggies in Allerton

**A new pub called Three Piggies has opened at 77-79 Allerton Road, at what was previously Vinci Wine Bar. It is serving four ales on hand pull, alongside eight keg beers and a fridge full of interesting bottled beers.**



A house beer - **Dancing Pig EPA**, brewed by Marston's - will be a regular. There are also three guest beers that will normally come from smaller breweries nationwide.

Owner Dom Levy - of the Tribeca group - hails from Yorkshire, which may reflect the choice. **Ilkley Pale** has already been on twice, with **Blonde Star** from Anarchy Brew Co. in Morpeth and **The Italian Job** from

Roosters, being early choices. The pub is described as an 'Ale House and Canteen'. Brunch is served early on and then 'Good Pub Food'. There is a function room available upstairs called 'The Barn' and free beer will be offered to all good players of their piano. The Three Piggies is open for food and drinks from 10.30am (10am at weekends) to midnight, but the management reserve the right to refuse admission after 10.45pm.

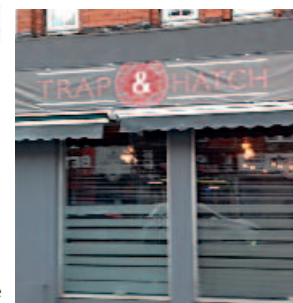
After visiting this pub, you may wish to walk along the road to try a pint at the Blackburne Eatery. A beer from a local brewery, such as Stamps or Rock the Boat, is normally available.

By Rogg Jones



## New Waterloo Micropub

A new venue opened at 135 South Road in Waterloo, which is the east end of South Road, next to The Liver. **The Trap & Hatch** calls itself a Micropub and Smokehouse. The name is derived from the number of concealed access points that were discovered during the conversion from its previous use as a restaurant. This free house can comfortably accommodate 50-60 people. There is a small beer garden/smoking area at the rear, which is open until 8pm. There are currently two handpumps on the bar, with room for up to two more if demand



dictates, along with fonts dispensing several craft beers - including one from **Tiny Rebel**. Premium spirits, wine, bottled beers, coffee and soft drinks complete the products on offer. Food was not available to start with. Ed and Paul report there was a delay in the delivery of an extractor fan, but service started mid-November. The menu will be available up to 8pm and will vary throughout the day. It will include sandwiches, burgers, chicken wings and dry cured meat platters.



Live music is on offer Friday to Sunday and will mainly feature local, acoustic solo artists. Free WiFi is available.

Opening hours were curtailed while food was not available, but are now 11am to 11pm every day, though subject to change at short notice.

By Andre Fu





## AND NOW WE ARE SIX

Due to popular demand, the once seasonal White Witch (3.9%) has been added to our championship core list - for even more Moorhouse's magic in North West pubs.



### The Perfect Spell - just ask for Moorhouse's

Publicans should contact Stuart Hayes on 07791 337727 or email: [stuart.hayes@moorhouses.co.uk](mailto:stuart.hayes@moorhouses.co.uk)



### Ice Witch weaves some seasonal magic from Moorhouse's

Moorhouse's is promising a spell of seasonal cheer with the Ice Witch (4.3% ABV) brew joining the Pendle Witches stable.

The festive release offers a 'lighter golden tippie, with easy drinking bitterness' to refresh those yuletide taste buds. Brewed with pale Maris Otter malt and the much-sought American Citra hop variety, it displays characteristics of tropical fruits - mango, passion fruit and pineapple. A striking witch-themed seasonal pump clip gives strong bar presence.

Sales director Mark Boardman said: "Ice Witch is being rolled out for the festivities to offer a light, easy drinking, but very distinctive alternative to the more traditional dark and heavy specials typical of the winter months. We expect it to go well again this year, as

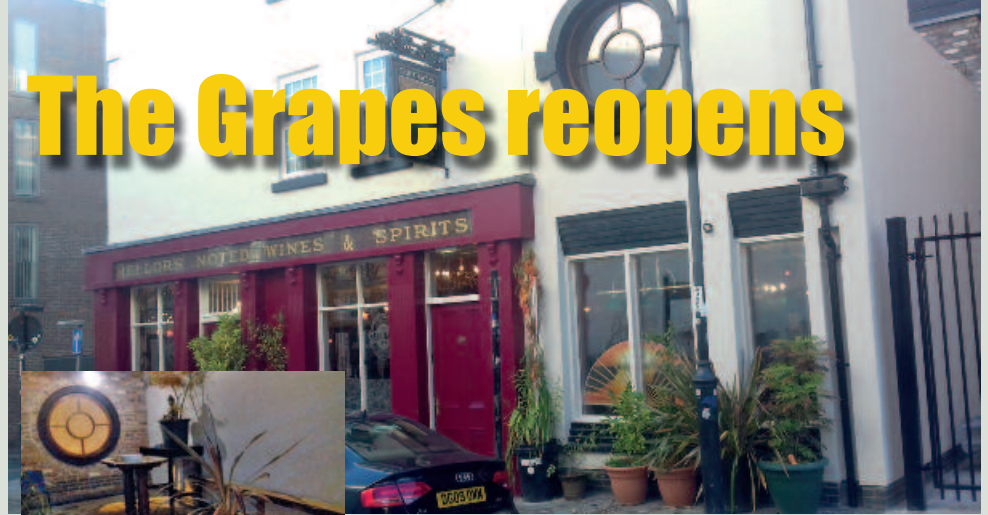
*lighter coloured ales are being enjoyed throughout the year now."*

Moorhouse's - Lancashire's leading independent brewer - predicts another Christmas cracker, as production is again ramped up to meet fast rising nationwide demand for its famous core ales; **Premier Bitter, Pride of Pendle, Black Cat, Blond Witch, Pendle Witches Brew and the fast-growing White Witch.**

#### For further media information, contact:

Steve Hobman, Rhino Public Relations: Mobile 07751 578605 Email: [shobman@rhinopr.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:shobman@rhinopr.freeserve.co.uk)

# The Grapes reopens



The Grapes, known as the Little Grapes (at the corner of Roscoe Street and Knight Street), reopened at the beginning of October after a period of major refurbishment. This has included an extension that makes the pub not so little anymore. There is now a new room to the right of the Roscoe Street door - and stairs that lead to a partly sheltered patio area on the roof of the

extension. There is now room for more people to enjoy this great pub. There are still nine pumps in use, mainly serving beers from smaller breweries - both local and regional. Work is continuing on the kitchen, so no food was available during my visit, but hopefully will be by the time you read this.

By Tony Williams



## New City Centre Pub

**Ranelagh's Tavern** (at 15-17 Ranelagh Street, just around the corner from Church Street) has opened and is selling real ale. There are currently three hand pumps - all of which pub manager, Phil, hopes to have in use throughout the week.

It is a free house and therefore not tied to any particular beers. To start with, the pub has had beers from **Caledonian and Black Sheep**, plus **Timothy Taylor Landlord**. Since then, there has been a good variety of real ales, including local beers recently.

The current cask beer list is displayed around the pub and on the windows, so all are aware of the beers available and the price. The price of a pint is between £2 and £2.45, depending on the ABV. This has attracted drinkers who might not normally drink cask ale, so there has been a good turnover of beer. Wi-Fi is available and live sport is shown. There is also live entertainment at weekends.

**The pub opens at 11am (noon on Sundays) and closes at 11pm, with extensions to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.**

By Andre Fu



CRICKETERS ARMS

# Christmas BEER & CIDER



FESTIVAL

Starts Boxing Day until New Year's Day

Over 60 Casks and 15 Real Ciders.  
30 In Serve, when 1 goes 1 comes on.

### List of Events

**Boxing Day**

All Sports will be shown.

**27th Dec**

**Sandy's Choir at 6pm**  
**Christmas Carols and Song Service**

**28th Dec**

**Christmas Jumper Competition**  
1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Prizes

**29th Dec**

**Pool Competition**  
£2 Entry, 1st Place - £50, 2nd Place - £30,  
3rd & 4th Places - £10

**30th Dec**

**Live Entertainment**

**New Year's Eve**

**The Big Party Music Mix** from 7pm - 1am  
Music inc. Motown, Northern Soul & All the Great Party Tunes.  
No tickets needed, front door will shut at 9pm  
**Fancy Dress** (optional)  
Great Prizes: 1st Prize - £100 Bar tab, 2nd Price - £50 Bar tab

Mulled Cider available



### Food available throughout the Festival:

Turkey Barms, Cheese & Cracker Board, Jacket Potato with Fillings

List of Cask Ales will be posted on Facebook.

cricketers arms supporters klub @cricksarmswa10

Peter Street, Town Centre, St Helens. WA10 2EB  
Telephone: 01744 361846



**CAMRA's Merseyside Pub of the Year 2015-16**  
Winner of Pride of St Helens, Excellence in Business Award

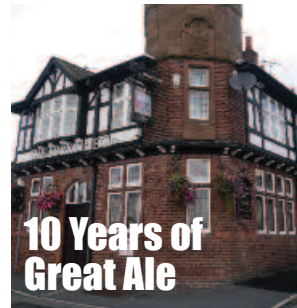
patron



Saint

# St Helens CAMRA News

News for the St Helens Ale Drinker



## 10 Years of Great Ale

On Friday 23rd September, we honoured one of the outstanding real ale pubs in St Helens for its long service in promoting real ale around the town.

The Turk's Head on Cooper Street has now been in ten consecutive Good Beer Guides, which no other pub in the town has managed to



achieve. Branch Chairman Alan Healey commented: "This is a great achievement for The Turk's. It shows the care and commitment Daryl and the staff put in to ensuring the customer always gets a perfect pint. It is very difficult to get one year in the Good Beer Guide - let alone ten - and

we hope they carry on and achieve even more in the coming years."

### From Shop to Pub

Dane Court is a very mundane shopping precinct in the suburb of Rainhill. Nondescript in terms of



architecture, you would not give it a second glance unless you were a local and off to the betting shop.

That was until the end of September, because now you have a reason to go! Dane Court is now the location for our area's latest micropub, The Skew Bridge Alehouse. Over the past couple of months, an abandoned shop has been carefully converted to a space that sells high-quality real ales and



cider and promotes good conversation. Initial visits have proved very agreeable. It has certainly added to the Rainhill nightlife scene, with many visitors using it for pre and post-meal drinks from the selection of nearby restaurants.



5 Dane Court, Rainhill,  
Merseyside L35 4LU  
0151 792 7906  
mail@skewbridge.co.uk  
www.skewbridge.co.uk

@SkewBridgeAlehouse  
@skewbridgepub  
skewbridge

Rainhill's First Micropub  
Opening mid-September





# Beer EnGin Micropub

Welcome to Knowsley's first Micropub situated in Whiston Village!!

9 Greenes Road  
Whiston L35 3RE  
07496 616132  
Facebook - beerengin1  
Twitter @beerengin1



Opening times:  
Closed Monday  
Tuesday - Thursday  
4.00pm - 9.30pm  
Friday till 10.00pm  
Saturday 2.00pm - 10.00pm  
Sunday 4.00pm - 9.00pm



Come and see us in the place everyone in Whiston is talking about! Guaranteed a great atmosphere, great conversation without the distraction of televisions, gaming machines and music!

Serving an ever changing variety of up to 5 cask ales mainly from local microbreweries, plus real ciders



abulous gins

Premium gins and fever-tree tonic.

Wine, craft beers and a bar snack or two!!



Cheers!

See you soon!  
Jeff, Debbie and Jodie



Oh, and we're dog friendly too - just ask our regular and poster girl, Flo!

# Welcome to the Vernon Arms

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

7 Handpumps (4 ever-changing, 1 cider)

Regulars: The Rev. James, Johnny Handsome, Rum Porter

- Gitane Zarah's Rum Porter (exclusive to The Vernon Arms)
- Food served Mon-Thur 12-7pm, Fri-Sun 12-4pm
- Belgian speciality bottled beers
- Large screen sports in HD
- Private function room available (The Latham Lounge)

The Vernon Arms offers all of the above in a freindly and safe atmosphere plus:  
Live entertainment on Fridays and Saturdays



@VernonArmsL2

Opening times: Sun-Thur 12pm-11pm, Fri-Sat 12pm-1am

www.vernonarms.net

69 Dale Street, L2 2HJ, 0151 236 6132



## St Helens CAMRA News continued

### Paws for thought?

Dog ownership in Britain is more popular than ever before - and there is nothing nicer than sitting with your well-behaved canine, having a pint in a nice comfortable real ale pub.

As an owner of two ex-racing greyhounds, my wife and I are



Alan and Neville enjoy a pint at the Brown Edge St Helens



Formby

regularly seen on licenced premises with our four-legged friends. Indeed, we have made a thing of writing a column in the St Helens CAMRA newsletter called 'Real Ale Greyhound', in which we write about our experiences in local real ale pubs with our dogs. It is commented on more than anything else, with many people asking where the hounds are off to next.

All over Merseyside, there are some excellent dog-friendly pubs. Indeed, there have been some years when it has been possible to judge the Merseyside Pub of the Year with dogs in tow. For pubs, allowing dogs sends a statement of welcome to customers. Visiting a pub with your dog will more

than likely vastly increase the number of people you talk to. Even the dogs get their own friends.

In a recent survey of 2500 dog owners, two thirds of respondents said they were put off visiting pubs if they were not dog-friendly. In my case at least, that includes whether my dogs are with me or not.

There are some rules however. It always pays to ask, as some pubs will have never thought about their dog-friendliness. Just like humans must behave in pubs, so do dogs. If your hound is some sort of psychopath and wants to fight the world - or charges around the pub, jumping on everyone and the furniture - then probably the pub is the wrong place. But equally, humans doing the same things would not be welcome either. Once shown the correct way, most dogs will attempt to please you and behave impeccably. Once the dog is on board with it, you can have some great days out in all our local branches.

#### Liverpool Branch

You can enjoy a great pub crawl, even in the city centre. Start in **The Caledonia** on Catherine Street and slowly make your way down the hill via **The Belvedere, Ye Cracke** and end up walking down to **The Baltic Fleet**.

#### Southport Branch

Get to Freshfield station and take a pleasant walk in the dunes (avoiding the red squirrels), before making your way to **The Freshfield pub**.

#### St Helens Branch

Three great pubs in the town centre: **The Cricketers, Talbot and Turk's Head** (outside food times).

#### Wirral Branch

**Gallaghers and The West Kirkby Tap** are both very dog-friendly.

There are of course others - and the best advice is to use **whatpub.com** to find the places local to where you are. Micropubs are often a good bet. For example, the **Beer EnGin** in Whiston.

I hope you enjoy your doggie days out - and maybe you will catch up with two retired athletes and their owners in a pub near you soon.

By Alan Healey



### Sad News

As a branch, we were very

saddened to hear of the passing of Phil Banks from The Wheatsheaf, Mill Lane, Sutton. Phil was a very long-standing and successful landlord, who had run the pub with his wife Jane for over 20 years. During this time, they had built the pub's reputation as one of the best places to go for home cooked food in St Helens, whilst also catering for cask ale drinkers by having four ales on. Our thoughts are with Jane, the staff and the customers who will all miss him greatly.



# THE SHIP & MITRE Brewing Company



The Ship & Mitre have launched their own beers this year, and here's an introduction from head brewer Joe.

'Dublin has a brewing heritage of course, but the range of beers and bars in Liverpool amazed me. In fact, it was a conversation with two randoms in what became my local, The Ship & Mitre that convinced me this was where I needed to live. I moved from Dublin six years or so and live round the corner from the pub.

With so much brewing knowledge individual to the brewery, I've been lucky enough to brew with most local brewers over the last three years. When The Ship wanted to develop their range I could hardly say no - what an honour! We're

'cuckoo' brewers, brewing on Stamps Brewery's beautiful kit in Vauxhall.

We wanted some dependable, reliable recipes, without a lot of fuss when brewing so we have a 'storecupboard' of just a few ingredients used in various ways for the beers. We also knew we wanted to make everyone welcome, so needed to kick off with a range. Level was the first recipe, inspired by some great Northern bitters, with Silhouette following as a dry stout that's not often brewed locally. Radiant was third, showcasing one of my favourite hops, Bramling Cross. Then Sublime uses some lovely citrus American hops for our Session Pale. And for this festival, we got to tweak the existing recipes and play with new ingredients.

We've had some great feedback on the names and designs. They were a real group effort as we had to have a range of people invested in the result - I think agreeing them took twice as long as choosing the recipes, and rightly so! They reflect the architecture and history of the building, and like the recipes they're plain-speaking, independent and modern.'



# Damson Stout to star at CASK

If the television programme 'Through the Keyhole' made a series asking 'Which pub is this?', you would almost certainly guess it was CASK in an instant, due to the distinctive array of ornaments adorning the walls.

An eBay forage for such ornaments found a commemorative tankard engraved in 1994 from Theakston Brewery, celebrating the 'trussing in' of Peter Coates as a Cooper. This proved an interesting addition to the theme, which could have



just been displayed in the cabinet, only for the joys of the internet to again play its part. Further browsing revealed that Peter is now the man behind Oak Creations - a craftsman of bespoke beautiful items made from used wine casks. It's certainly worth looking him up at:

[www.oakbarrelcreations.co.uk](http://www.oakbarrelcreations.co.uk)

It was too much of a temptation to have such an opportunity on the doorstep. Therefore, a few phone calls and emails were followed by a trip over to North Wales, with an old Theakston



Sampler Cask for refurbishment - and hopes of getting two new wooden pins made.

Peter agreed to make the pins using staves from French wine casks, paying particular attention to the finished barrels - both for visual effect and the all-important impact on beer quality. Though initially disappointed that the old pin was beyond repair, having both the old and new in the pub just adds to the beauty.

Last year in CASK, the glorious year-old 2014 Wapping Damson Stout sat on the bar, being served by gravity dispense. Service from a plastic pin didn't quite

feel right. With another pin of the Damson Stout in the cellar, collecting the new wooden pins from Peter seemed a perfect opportunity.

Enter Angus Morrison, who had originally brewed the beer nearly two years ago. Graciously, Angus took on the task of transferring his beer from plastic to wood. Various soakings of the pin included a generous soaking with rum. The Damson Stout was transferred in May 2016 and has been in the cellar at CASK ever since. Angus will be at CASK on 14th December when the Oak Aged Damson Stout goes on sale.

By Michelle Barton



Angus Morrison and Ian Barton



# Liverpool CAMRA Coach Trips

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. To book contact [social@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:social@liverpoolcamra.org.uk) or phone Ian Macadam 07521 741 586

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

- Jan 7th: Chorlton-cum-Hardy and Lymm.
- Feb 4th: Burton-on-Trent.
- Mar 11th: Leicester (for beer festival).
- Apr 8th: York.
- May 6th: Stonehouse Brewery, Oswestry and A. N Other on the way back.
- Jun 10th: Hinckley and Rugby.
- Jul 15th: Skipton, Barnoldswick, and Colne.
- Aug 12th: Hull.
- Sep 9th: Harrogate and Otley.
- Oct 14th: Nottingham (for beer festival. Date to be finalised).
- Nov 11th: Shrewsbury area (possibly another brewery visit).



# CAMRA Branch Diaries

## Liverpool CAMRA Branch Diary

- Saturday 10th December:** Branch Christmas party. Ticket only. Details in Newsletter.
- Friday 16th December:** Daytime trip by train to Manchester for Christmas Market and pub crawl. Details from Sue: [social@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:social@liverpoolcamra.org.uk)
- Wednesday 4th January:** Committee meeting. Baltic Fleet, 7.30pm.
- Wednesday 18th January:** Branch AGM. Ship & Mitre Dale Street, 8pm. Details in newsletter.
- Sunday 5th February:** Sunday meet up. North Western Lime Street. 1pm
- Wednesday 15th to Saturday 19th February:** Liverpool Beer Festival. Details in this magazine.

## Wirral CAMRA Branch Diary

- Thursday 8th December:** Branch Meeting, Gallaghers. Meet 8.30pm for 9pm start.
  - Wednesday 4th January:** Committee Meeting, The Lion. 8pm start followed by Branch Social.
  - Thursday 12th January:** Branch Meeting, Gallaghers. Meet 8.30pm for 9pm start.
  - Wednesday 1st February:** Committee Meeting, venue to be announced. 8pm start followed by Branch Social.
  - Thursday 8th February:** Annual General Meeting, followed by Branch Meeting, Gallaghers.
  - Please note, the AGM will start at 8.30pm.**
  - Please note: our website has moved to:** [www.wirral.camra.org.uk](http://www.wirral.camra.org.uk)
  - Twitter @WirralCAMRA
  - Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CamraWirral-The-Campaign-For-Real-Ale-175471572502119/>
- CAMRA members and non-members are welcome at all meetings. Please come along, find out what we're up to and give us the news from your local.

## St Helens CAMRA Branch Diary

- 14th December,** Branch Meeting: Glasshouse.
  - Committee Meeting: **no meeting (Christmas)**
  - 11th January,** Branch Meeting: Turk's Head.
  - 25th January,** Committee Meeting: Haresfinch Social.
  - 27th January,** Branch Meeting: Phoenix Inn, New members and activation night.
  - 8th February,** Branch Meeting: Wheatsheaf.
  - 22nd March,** Committee Meeting: Union.
  - 8th March,** Branch Meeting: The Sun.
  - 22nd March,** Committee Meeting: Stanley Arms
- Meetings start at 8pm. All members welcome.

## Isle of Man CAMRA Branch Meeting Schedule

- Saturday 10th December:** 2pm, Ballasalla. Start at the Whitestone, then move on to Castletown (provisionally, to have a Christmas dinner in the pub).
- Saturday 14th January:** 2pm, Peel. Start at the Royal Hotel to discuss provisional 2018 Good Beer Guide entries.
- Saturday 28th January:** 2pm. Mini-Bus trip to north/eastern pubs to survey 2018 Good Beer Guide entries (meet at Rovers, Douglas).
- Saturday 11th February:** 2pm. Mini-Bus trip to south/western pubs to survey 2018 Good Beer Guide entries (meet at Woodbourne, Douglas).
- Wednesday 15th February:** 7.30pm, Douglas. Clinch's to finalise GBG entries.

## MerseyAle Contributors

- Tony Williams
- Sonia James-Henry
- Tony Morgan
- Andre Fu
- Dave Halliwell
- Alan Healey
- Dave MacBryde
- Dave Bawden
- Michelle Barton
- Dave Hutchinson

Rogg Jones

- Tim Smith
- Rob Carter
- Martin Powell
- Steve Berks
- Tom Duffy

## Photos

- Tony Williams
- Dennis Jones
- Mel James-Henry
- Joel Garnett
- Dave Halliwell
- Rob Carter



Liverpool CAMRA



MerseyAle

[www.facebook.com/CAMRALiverpool](https://www.facebook.com/CAMRALiverpool) @LiverpoolCAMRA

## Advertising Rates:

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Advertising Email details/enquiries to : [howard.perry@liverpoolcamra.org.uk](mailto:howard.perry@liverpoolcamra.org.uk)

**PLEASE NOTE WE DO NOT TAKE CASH FOR MERSEYALE ADS**  
LICENSEES AND STAFF - BEWARE OF PEOPLE ASKING FOR CASH PAYMENT FOR ADS

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Franks is the perfect combination of local pub, students dive and sports bar.

3 REAL ALES  
LIVE SPORTS · LIVE MUSIC  
LOW PRICE DRINKS

Open all day every day from midday

186 SMITHDOWN ROAD LIVERPOOL



Liverpool  
**ST GEORGE'S HALL**  
**WINTER**  
**ALES FESTIVAL**

Thursday 26th - Saturday 28th January 2017

**200+** **REAL ALE**  
**& CIDERS**

LOCAL FOOD - WINE - PROSECCO - BOTTLED BEERS - CONTINENTAL BEERS  
LIVERPOOL GIN - LIVERPOOL VODKA

Thursday 26th January 2017

Evening: 18.00 - 22.30 - £7

Friday 27th January 2017

Daytime: 11:30 - 16.00 - £7

Evening: 18.00 - 22.30 - £8

Saturday 28th January 2017

Daytime: 11:30 - 16.00 - £8

Evening: 18.00 - 22.30 - £8

Please note that we are unable to predict the popularity of the real ales. Therefore some ales may run out as the festival goes on



\*Valid on Thursday evening session and Friday daytime session on presentation of a CAMRA card



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Tickets visit:  
**[www.realaleevents.com](http://www.realaleevents.com)**

**Ticket Price Includes: Entry into the beer festival on the session purchased - A souvenir half pint glass - Full colour programme**