

MERSEYALE

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Feb-April 2012 FREE



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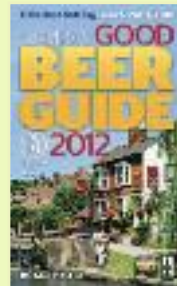
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See Board for future
Real Ales



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Fourth Thursday of the Month 8pm

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MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool and Districts Branch

MerseyAle Editor

John Armstrong

MerseyAle Contacts

Comments/news/letters/photos
merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

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Liverpool and Districts CAMRA

Main Branch Contact

Jean Pownceby

contact@merseycamra.org.uk

Contact for Socials and

Coach Trips only

Ian MacAdam 07521 741 586

Liverpool Branch Chair

Geoff Edwards

chair@merseycamra.org.uk

Web Sites

Liverpool and Districts

CAMRA Branch

www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

QR Codes page 55

Isle of Man CAMRA Branch

www.isleofmancamra.org.uk

CAMRA national site

www.camra.org.uk



Cover

An homage by our designer Dennis Jones to the famous French poster artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec based on the iconic poster Ambassadeurs featuring the nightclub performer Aristide Bruant.

MerseyAle – mon magazine preferé !!!

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



Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle 2012

Coalition Government Betrays the British Pub and its Customers

The big national news is the barefaced decision of the Coalition Government NOT to act on the clear recommendation of the Parliamentary Select Committee for Business and Innovation that a Statutory Code of Practice should be introduced to regulate the excesses of Britains PubCos, which are leading to the closure of many pubs. Read full story on pages 13 to 19.

The critics of the decision were forthright in their condemnation;

Government Fails to Listen -

Mike Benner CAMRA Chief Executive

Government Sell Out to the Devil - Brian Binley MP

Government Taking the Easy Way Out - Greg Mulholland MP,

Chair Parliamentary Save the Pub Group

Liverpool CAMRA is a Campaigning Branch

Liverpool CAMRA has a long reputation for being a campaigning CAMRA branch. Read about the Liverpool CAMRA Campaigning Year page 4 and the current Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign, including the latest Discovering CAMRA event page 5. Like to be involved in a CAMRA branch that combines campaigning with a strong social events

programme? Then go to page 53 and join CAMRA today !!

Liverpool - Every Day a Beer Festival !!

Many people reading this MerseyAle will be visiting Liverpool for the famous sell out **Liverpool Beer Festival** – the Only Beer Festival in the World to be Held in a Cathedral !!

Well the good news is that every day in Liverpool is a real ale beer festival with over 110 pubs featured in the free **CAMRA Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Map**. Detailed maps guide you to the pubs where you can experience Liverpool's unique pub culture which is the beating heart of the city.

The importance of pubs to Liverpool is expressed in the feature on page 33.

It is not for nothing that Liverpool is described as the Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain!!!

Enjoy !!



John Armstrong Editor

LIVERPOOL CAMRA THE CAMPAIGNING YEAR

Liverpool CAMRA is a Campaigning Branch and here is a snapshot of the Campaigning Year

Liverpool Beer Festival February. Renowned internationally as the Only Beer Festival in the World to be Held in a Cathedral. Always a sell out event which has become as much a part of the Liverpool Events Calendar as the Grand National.

And that is just the start !!

Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign. A programme of around 14 events throughout the year designed to encourage new people to try real ale especially women and young people.

Discovering CAMRA Events. Two large events a year to introduce new and intending members to what Liverpool CAMRA does and how they can become involved.

Mild Month (currently May). Events to promote Mild as a classic beer style with great flavours.

LocAle the green local pint. Scheme to promote local brewers within a 30 mile radius by publicising pubs that undertake to offer regularly at least one beer from a local brewer, thereby reducing beer miles and supporting local business.

Liverpool CAMRA Oscars Night (usually July). A night of awards and media coverage recognising contributions to serving and promoting real ale in Liverpool including the award for Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year and awards for Pubs of Excellence.

Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Festival. A two month programme of events in September and October promoting Liverpool's Real Ale Pubs including pub real ale festivals, special pub events, free tastings, music events, beer and food events and much much more. See MerseyAle Autumn edition for programme details.

Liverpool Real Ale Pubs Map. Your free colour map to over 110 real ale pubs in Liverpool and surrounding areas. No need to get lost again looking for the best pubs in Liverpool.

All the Fun of the Queue (December). Almost as famous as the event itself is the queue for tickets on Liverpool Beer Festival Ticket Sales day. Be there early to buy yours - ticket details in Winter MerseyAle and on website www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

365 Days a Year – Liverpool the Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain. Liverpool has a pub for all reasons including pubs which are recognised as having the best interiors in the country. One day is not enough to do Liverpool pubs justice !! So Stay Another Day and enjoy!

Promoting Real Ale, Liverpool Pubs and CAMRA. Get your free copy of MerseyAle from local pubs. Five editions a year. Copies can be read on line on the Branch website www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk which also informs you of all the Branch events and activities. Also check the Branch Facebook page.

Liverpool CAMRA – a Campaigning Branch – Join CAMRA now on page 53



LIVERPOOL CAMRA BRINGING NEW PEOPLE TO REAL ALE CAMPAIGN

Discovering CAMRA - A New Event for New Liverpool CAMRA Members

A ground breaking event took place in November in the function room at the Fly in the Loaf Hardman Street when Liverpool CAMRA Branch organised a special Discovering CAMRA evening for sixty new members. This was an opportunity to find out first hand what CAMRA is doing locally and nationally, and how to become involved in activities both of both a campaigning and social nature.

The evening also provided the opportunity to try a range of different real ale beer styles, followed by real jazz performed by the Martin Smith band. They will also be performing at the Liverpool Beer Festival in February.

So successful was the event that the decision has been taken to run similar Discovering CAMRA evenings twice a year as an introduction for new members.

Two of the event organisers Jan Sorsby and Helen McCall present a personal view of the evening.



Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign Snowballs !!

Liverpool CAMRA's rolling programme of events, 'Bringing New People to Real Ale', also known as the **Snowball Campaign** on account of the method used of encouraging people to bring a friend creating a Snowball effect, continues to roll. November saw an extremely successful event in the **Fly in the Loaf**, Hardman Street, aimed at new and prospective members from our ever-expanding contact list.

This was a new concept, a **Discovering CAMRA** event targeted for people who had recently joined CAMRA and wanted to find out more and how they could become involved.

We'd wanted to do something a bit different to the events that had been arranged to date, something that told new members about CAMRA and their branch and how they could become involved in it without scaring them off.

BRINGING NEW PEOPLE TO REAL ALE CAMPAIGN

Discovering CAMRA - A New Event for New Liverpool CAMRA Members



The programme for the evening was varied, and included music from the brilliant Martin Smith jazz outfit, who provided us with a range of musical experiences to enhance the event. (You can hear them regularly in the Caledonia, Catharine Street - well worth catching).

A range of beers was on offer, comprising a variety of styles - something for all palates and showcasing the range of flavours you can experience with real ales.

One of the aims of the event was to provide information on further involvement with CAMRA, and so several brief talks were given.



Geoff and Dominic

Geoff Edwards Chair of the Branch welcomed everyone to the event and licensee Dominic Hornsby welcomed us to the Fly in the Loaf.

We'd decided on a CAMRA quiz, a fairly simple one, we weren't expecting any Mastermind contestants. Just as well as we didn't have a black chair and anyway it was supposed to be fun. It went well and it did prove to be a light hearted fun way of learning information about CAMRA.



Questions included;

- 'Where was the first meeting of Liverpool CAMRA held?' (the Globe, Cases Street);
- 'In what year was the local Branch founded?' (1974);
- 'Which local pub has been in every edition of the Good Beer Guide?' (the Roscoe Head, Roscoe Street).
- Few had difficulty with the question asking them to name Liverpool's real ale magazine!

Most importantly people who'd not spoken before soon started chatting and the room filled with the buzz of conversation. You could describe it as the Snowball Icebreaker !!

The Snowball team gave a short talk on what we'd achieved since we'd started the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign in February 2011 and what we planned to do in the next 6-12 months.



Sonia

This was followed by a description of CAMRA as being a Campaign of Two Halves, combining campaigning activities and social events. In short something for everyone.

Branch Committee Member Sonia James- Henry told

us how to complete our beer scores and how these were used to select the pubs with best

beer quality for listing in the Good Beer Guide. So now no-one has an excuse not to complete their scores, submit them, and help to choose our Pub of the Year.

As usual at a Snowball event, talk, hilarity and mirth were central to the evening, and the impromptu choir in the corner added to the occasion. It must be the effect of the trademark Snowballs' tealights !!

As at most good parties, those who arrived alone or in a small group soon found that the room full of strangers soon turned to friendly faces. Beer is central to the evening - but the conversational topics were wide-ranging, from the serious to the silly.

All in all, another successful evening for Liverpool CAMRA and its growing membership. An invitation to a CAMRA "New People" event has now progressed from a 'Should I go?' 'Will I know anyone?' to being one of the hottest tickets in town.

So the verdict. A success - we'll have to do this again. In hindsight, what could have gone wrong - good music, good beer and being with friends is the recipe for a really good night out. And it was.

Helen McCall and Jan Sorsby

For information on future Bringing New People to Real Ale Snowball Events email contact@merseycamra.org.uk

Discovering CAMRA Event at Fly in the Loaf - A Thank You
Thank you for organising such a wonderful evening, We all had a brilliant time, and as our boisterous singing towards the end demonstrated, it brought many people together that had never met, or drank real ale before.

All the best Menna

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MerseyAle news

MerseyAle Photo Goes National



This photo from the Winter 2011 MerseyAle went national being run in the December edition of CAMRA's national newspaper What's brewing and appearing in the prestigious spot as Photo of the Week in the pubs trade paper the Morning Advertiser.

The MerseyAle story of the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign Women's Real Ale and Food Matching Tasting session run in partnership with Hawkshead Brewery and the Dispensary pub went national in November.

Bierkeller Stanley Street Closes

The Bierkeller Stanley Street one of the recent wave of new real ale outlets in Liverpool, closed the first week in November. A brave effort by Caroline and Dave formerly of



the Augustus John, the cellar bar featuring world beers never quite took off. Real ale was introduced later with eventually two hand pumps and a 20p per pint discount for CAMRA members. Liverpool CAMRA helped with the

promotion of the real ale and held a Special Event there in May which attracted over 70 people to enjoy five real ales and real ciders. Unfortunately the economic climate proved to be too much and the decision was taken to close in November.

MerseyAle wishes Caroline and Dave all the best for future ventures.

This follows the closure of another new Real Ale Wave pub the nearby **Officers Mess** on Victoria Street in August following a dispute over rent levels.

New PubCo on the Block Stonebridge PubCo Moves into Liverpool

Stonebridge a PubCo with 560 pubs nationwide has acquired a batch of pubs in the Liverpool and Cheshire areas mainly from M&B and the Town and City company. The pubs include the Slug and Lettuce, the Yate's located in Concert Square, Queens Square, Allerton Road and Bootle; the Blob Shop, Ruby Sky, the Flute, the Albert Lark Lane, Farmers Arms Clubmoor, the Old Swan, and the George Crosby.

Stonegate is the result of the merger of the Stonegate Pub Company which bought 333 M&B pubs in 2010, and Town and City operators of the Slug and Lettuce and Yate's chains. Stonegate is now the largest privately held managed pub operator in the UK. The group has 560 pubs, revenues approaching half a billion pounds and employs 10,000 staff. Ian Payne is Chairman and Toby Smith the Chief Executive. TDR private equity firm is the majority owner.

Payne, said: "The merger of these two companies makes excellent

strategic and commercial sense. Both businesses are in year to date sales growth and, by combining their excellent people and properties, the enlarged Stonegate is in a strong position to continue to outperform the market."

Smith said: "I am delighted that we have been able to bring together two exceptional businesses which together will create a formidable force in the UK pub industry

Buy a Tramway and Get a Theatre and a Beer Festival

Pacific Road Arts Centre, the venue for the Wirral Beer Festival and many concerts and events, closed its doors at the end of December as part of the cuts programme at Wirral Council. The building is up for sale. This puts the future of the Beer Festival in doubt as there is no readily available alternative venue. There is the possibility that the Council will allow one off hire of the building even if closed which may be a way of retaining the Beer Festival. Otherwise the 2011 event could prove to have been the last. The building includes the performance area used for the Beer Festival and regular concerts and



Photo by Pimlico Badger

also a large space with tram tracks used for storage of trams. There have been proposals that the building might be given over to a tram museum as Birkenhead operated the first trams in Britain.

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MerseyAlenews continued



Pacific Road Birkenhead
Beer Festival

Merseytravel had expressed interest in both taking over the building and in extending the existing heritage tramway to serve the proposed Wirral Waters development area. However since then Merseytravel has had substantial cuts in funding from central government and new initiatives have been put on hold.

Currently the future of Pacific Road remains unclear.

Athletic at Stamps Too

On Friday 6th January **Stamps Too** in Waterloo received a phone call. The person said they had noticed the bar was in the GBG and wondered if it would be alright if they brought some Oldham Athletic supporters for some beers before setting off to the FA Cup match with Liverpool FC later that evening. It was agreed they could come and later in the afternoon two coach loads, up to 80 supporters !! turned up at Stamps Too!

They had an enjoyable time in the bar being able to sample a good range of beers (including Liverpool Organic's Imperial Russian Stout) all in excellent condition (as always).

At least as they travelled home after losing the game they could think back about their time in Stamps Too and smile.

What a refreshing change for a pub in the suburbs to be selected as the destination for an afternoon visit instead of taking the simple way out and just dropping them in the centre of Liverpool.

The Brook Hotel Crosby reopened before Christmas and was serving cask ale.

Alan Lloyd

Waterloo News

The Alexandra, an old Higsons pub near the station, now an Enterprise pub is advertising Pedigree for £2 a pint. On my visit, though, the beers on offer were **Black Sheep Best** and **Bombardier**, but despite the pub being open a couple of hours the barmaid had not been asked for either of them and was not confident with the quality. The pub is available for lease.

On the opposite side of the road is **the Raven**, a Greene King pub. On my visit the single hand pump had **Speckled Hen** that was in good condition.

Around the corner, on Church Road, is another Greene King pub, the **Lion & Unicorn**. On my visit hand pumps were advertising **IPA** and **Speckled Hen**, but neither were available.



The choice of guest beers at the **Volunteer Canteen** has been a bit more adventurous recently. **Inveralmond Lia Fail** was on excellent form on a recent visit.

All five pumps at **Stamps Too** were Locales on the same day, including two from **Liverpool Craft Brewery**.

The Old Bank was serving good beers from the **Liverpool One Brewery**.

A new Wetherspoon pub is due to open nearby in April and will add to the variety of beer available.

Wetherspoon News

Kev Simmons has moved from the **Mockbeggar Hall** at Moreton Cross on the Wirral to the **Picturedrome**

on Kensington. After several months with the real ales at a promotional 99p a pint the price has gone up to £1.39. Well worth a visit.

Everest Maghull

Wetherspoon has bought the Everest in Maghull and should open in April.

Stonegate pubs (see page 9)

The Yates pub at Queens Square has reopened after a brief closure for refurbishment and now has Cask Marque accreditation. There are now four hand pumps, with **Black Sheep** and **Lancaster Blond** adding to the usual **Bombardier** and house **Yates Bitter**. The norm is not to have all four beers on at once. Look out for the promotional £1.99 meals.

The Albert on Lark Lane appears to have had less choice under its new owners. **Hobgoblin** was available on a recent visit.

Bier Lark Lane

This sister pub to Bier on Newington is selling ales under the slogan 'If we tap it they'll come'. Recently the beers have tended to come from Cains.

Also part of the same group is **The Dovedale Towers**, Penny Lane. Up to eight ales are on offer here,



adding to the real ale scene in the suburbs.

Liverpool One brewery

Following the departure of Gary Rice from the company there was a gap in production, but the beers are now being produced again and are once more available at the **Liverpool One Bridewell**.

Tony Williams

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Government Slammed by MPs in Vote on PubCos Parliament Unanimously Passes Fair Deal for Pubs Motion

Following a lively debate on the floor of the House of Commons, during which the Government was heavily criticised for rejecting proposals by the Business Select Committee, MPs have unanimously passed a motion criticising Government's lack of action on pub companies as falling short of their own commitments and requiring the Government to commission an independent review of self regulation in the pub sector.

Over 5,000 CAMRA members individually contacting their local MPs asking them to support this motion.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive said:

"CAMRA is delighted that MPs from all parties have highlighted the inadequacy of the Government's attempts to tackle unfair business practices in the pub sector and that the Government are now obliged to commission an independent review into the matter. Following the success of this motion the Government now has a chance to think again and to consult on meaningful proposals to ensure the survival of many thousands of pubs.

"The large pub companies must be encouraged to provide their lessees with free of tie and guest beer options accompanied by an open market rent review. These steps would effectively self regulate the operation of tie agreements".

The Motion passed by Parliament:

That this House believes that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' proposals for reform of the pub industry fall short of the undertaking given to the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee in July 2010 and that only a statutory code of practice which includes a free-of-tie option with an open market rent review and an independent adjudicator will resolve the contractual problems between

the pub companies and their lessees; and calls on the Government to commission a review of self-regulation of the pub industry in the Autumn of 2012 to be conducted by an independent body approved by the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee.



Points From the Debate

"The Prime Minister is dodging his round at the bar on this issue".
Tom Blenkinsop MP

"Pubcos have been drinking in the last chance for so long now, that they must be under the table!" Martin Horwood MP

"PubCos have an absolutely dismal record of keeping their commitments." John Pugh MP Southport

"Neither the industry nor the Secretary of State have delivered on their commitments" Caroline Lucas MP Green Party

"it is counter-intuitive for pub companies to increase rents and other costs when pubs are already struggling. The issue of the beer tie is one part of the equation which is leading to so many of our pubs closing". Charlotte Leslie MP Government Big Society Ambassador

"It's like me renting you a house, but telling you that you can only buy your food in Harrods" Hugh Bayley MP

The Federation of Small Businesses found that 87% of licensees would like to be free of the tie.

The IPPR think tank found that 45% of tied publicans earn less than £15,000 a year



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THE LORD WARDEN LONDON ROAD

Coalition Government Betrays the British Pub and Pub Customers



Government Rejects Select Committee Call for Statutory Code for PubCos



In November the Coalition Government failed to implement the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee (BISC) recommendation of a Statutory Code of Practice for PubCos, instead saying the current Industry Framework Code will be strengthened and made legally binding. There are also plans to introduce a Pub Independent Conciliation Advisory Service (PICAS) and Pubs Advisory Service (PAS).

In a move which left many observers speechless, the Coalition government completely ignored the strong recommendation of the Select Committee that now was the time to introduce a Statutory Code. The Committee had produced a damning report on the PubCos and

their failure to make a voluntary Code of Practice work over a five year period. Despite this the Government chose to ignore the recommendation and will continue to rely on the failed model of voluntary industry regulation.

The Government's response has failed to address the key issues of providing lessees with a genuine free of tie and guest beer option, and so will not rebalance the relationship between struggling licensees and large pub companies. CAMRA is also concerned that even the limited package that has been announced may not be delivered given pub companies' history of broken promises and abandoned commitments. The Select Committee had made clear that it had no confidence in the British Pubs and Brewers Association citing its five year failure to make any progress with implementing a voluntary Code of Conduct for PubCos.

What the Critics Say – Government Fails to Listen

Mike Benner, CAMRA's Chief Executive said:

'The Government has been cavalier in rejecting the recommendations of the Business Select Committee and instead putting its faith in the ability of the very companies accused of malpractice to finally put their house in order. The lack of any formal public consultation on this package of measures is truly remarkable and suggests a failure of Government to listen to all



interested parties including the consumer.

'Pubs are vitally important not just to the millions of regular pub goers but also to the health of communities and the overall economy. The failure of the Government to secure a more substantial reform package is a massive blow to the Prime Minister's aspirations to lead a "pub friendly Government".'

What the Critics Say – Government Sell Out to the Devil

Brian Binley MP, a member of the Business Select Committee, has been reported in the Morning Advertiser as saying:

"The Government has sold out to the devil on the question of publicans rights. The Government needs to

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Brian Binley MP

recognise that publicans are amongst the leading opinion formers in this country and to renege on promises of this kind will harm the Government enormously in a wider sense way beyond the issues of our pubs network. It will impact upon people's perception of the honesty of the Government itself."

Predictably Family brewers and PubCos welcomed the Government's decision

to protect the tie and shun a statutory Code of Practice for the industry.

Enterprise Inns chief executive Ted Tuppen, who faced intense scrutiny from members of the Select Committee, said: "We are delighted that having examined the issues raised by the BISC, the Government has concluded that self-regulation in the UK pub industry can provide effective protection for individual publicans, and that the entire industry may now concentrate all of its energy and resources on the real challenges facing UK pubs without further distraction."

However, the new measures have been described as a "travesty for tenants" and "stitch up" by pub lobbyists who believe it represents a

What the Critics Say - Taking the Easy Way Out

Greg Mulholland MP, Parliamentary Save the Pub Group Chair, said:

"Ministers and officials have either taken the easy way out or have had the wool pulled over their eyes by the very people so criticised by the Select Committee. The response does nothing to address the fundamental point about the unfair share of turnover pubcos take from pubs, which makes it impossible for many tenants to make a living, even when their takings are at a decent level."



U-turn by the coalition government. Lib Dem chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Save the Pub Group, Greg Mulholland MP said: "This is a quite baffling response from the Government, considering that ministers clearly signed up to the plan put in place by BIS in March 2010, which was to legislate and rebalance the industry if the PubCos failed to reform."

"There are clear questions of ethics here.

Effectively ministers have been negotiating with one side of this long standing dispute, without the other side even knowing about it and haven't even consulted with the majority of industry organisations about what should be in the codes of practice.

"Quite simply, coming up with a solution agreed only with the PubCos and their representative organisation makes the reforms illegitimate and the fact that the new mediation service will be PubCo funded is farcical. I suspect it will not even be used by the vast majority of tenants who will see it as yet another PubCo stitch-up.

The Save the Pub Group will campaign for reform and will of course continue to push for real change and we will use all means at our disposal to do this".



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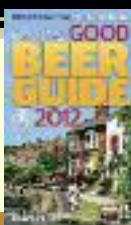


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Mulholland Slams PubCo Business Model

*"The business model of the PubCos has been
akin to the banks."*

*They overvalued their estates, borrowed vast amounts
of money against that and when the property market
collapsed, they found their ludicrous valuations were
wrong and they suddenly found themselves billions of
pounds in debt.*

*"They are trying to service those debts – mainly with
foreign creditors – by taking more and more from the
turnover of each pub."*

Mulholland said the Federation of Small Businesses
and the Forum for Private Business had been asking
for a free-of-tie option for lessees and an open market
rent review.

**"In the past if a pub owner was tied he paid more for the
beer, but received a discounted rent. What has happened
is the pub companies have increasingly put the rents and
beer prices up."**

Pub campaigners such as Justice for Licensees argue
the only way to resolve the issue is to introduce an
independent assessment of what rent should be paid
for normal beer prices, and if a licensee is willing to
charge higher prices, the rent is reduced.

Mulholland said the Business Department's self-
regulatory deal, putting the existing codes of practice
on a legal footing, was "not the option people want –
they want a free-of-tie option to end the market
abuse".

**He added the proposed code made matters worse "since
pubcos' wealthy lawyers are using it as a way of binding
tenants and lessees into the code of practice that is
inadequate, including excluding the option of going free
of tie".**

Small Beer From Coalition Government

• Rejection of Select Committee call
for Statutory code of Conduct for
PubCos

• Reliance on the existing voluntary
self regulation by PubCos and the
British Beer and Pub Association which
the Select Committee showed had
failed to deliver in the past five years

• Plans to introduce a Pub
Independent Conciliation Advisory

Service (PICAS) and a Pubs Advisory
Service (PAS)

• A requirement to follow rental
guidelines

• A requirement to publish national
wholesale price lists

• No action on providing PubCo
licensees with a genuine free of tie
and guest beers option

"FREE UP THE BRITISH PUB" RALLY CALLS TIME ON PUBCO REFORM

Prior to the Coalition Government
announcement that it would not
introduce a Statutory Code of
Conduct for PubCos (see page 15) a
major rally to Free Up the British
Pub was held at the House of
Commons. Twelve MPs were
joined by eighty CAMRA
members and licensees to urge the
Government to take action on
PubCo reform which will result in
better pubs, better value for
money and fewer pub closures.

Liverpool PubCo licensee Carol
Ross of the Roscoe Head received a
personal invitation following the
written evidence she presented to
the Select Committee enquiry.

Speaking to a packed room which
could have been filled three times
over with the huge amount of
interest in the event, were CAMRA

Chief Executive Mike Benner, the
Federation of Small Businesses and
the Forum of Private Businesses as
well as influential MPs from all
parties.

Adrian Bailey MP, Labour MP and
Chair of the Business Select
Committee which produced the
PubCo report highlighted the
amazing coalition of organisations
supporting reform of the "failing
pubco business model".

Brian Binley MP, Conservative MP
and member of the Business select
committee said he was "bitterly
disappointed that the pubcos had
failed to realise they are in the last
chance saloon". He said that pubs
are "the jewel in the crown of our
communities" and must be saved.

Greg Mulholland MP, Lib Dem MP
and Chair of the Parliamentary

Save the Pub Group, said that the
select committee's exhaustive report
had laid out the solutions to
Government and all they need to do
is implement them.


He pointed out that the
Government had already promised
to act on the Committee's
recommendations, and Mr Binley
ended with a warning that
politicians should keep their word
and business secretary Vince Cable
should "beware" if he fails to keep
that promise...

Well we
now know
that the
Coalition
Government
has failed to
keep its
promise.
Vince Cable
beware !!




CAMRA'S Merseyside
PUB OF THE YEAR

"Where else can a chap avail himself of the very best in gentleman's grooming and then enjoy a couple of pints of top-notch real ale in the same establishment?"
- The Chester Beer Project, 2011



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A Whopping Wapping Million



Wapping brewery is soon to brew its millionth pint and will also be celebrating its tenth birthday with a Celebratory Birthday Ale.

It was January 2002 when the new Wapping brewery produced its first brew designated as Gyle 1 in the cellar of the Baltic Fleet. Ten years on the brewery is now on Gyle 788. The multi award winning brewery has gone from strength to strength and is about to brew its one millionth pint. Quite an achievement and a credit to brewer Stan Shaw.

The capacity of the brewery is set to double to 16 barrels with the installation of two new fermenters now complete. This will enable an increase in the availability of bottled Wapping beers and also new free trade accounts, a recent example being the Okells pubs Rigby's Dale Street and the Fly in the Loaf Hardman Street.

Pubs Bear Burden of 35% Increase in Beer Tax

Beer sales in pubs were down by 4.3% between July and September 2011 compared to the previous year, equivalent to 45 million fewer pints. During the same period beer sales in supermarkets and off licenses rose.

The British Beer and Pubs Association blamed the drop on the dramatic increase in tax on beer which has risen by 35% since March 2008. The Association claims that a pint in the pub is becoming unaffordable for many people contributing to continuing pub closures as people opt to drink at home on cheap supermarket alcohol.

The Secret of Lancashire Cricket Success - MerseyAle!! An Unbeatable Combination

Lancashire's County Championship match winning spinner Gary Keedy shows us the secret of his success - MerseyAle!! Seen at Taunton after the last day victory which clinched Lancashire's first Championship for seventy seven years.

And the supporters led by IOM CAMRA Branch Contact and Lancashire member Angela Aspin celebrated the win with MerseyAle!! Result all round.

Lancashire will play their first five home Championship games at Aigburth Liverpool and MerseyAle will be there in support.



More Try Real Ale

2008 - 35% of adult drinkers had tried Real Ale
2011 - 52% had tried Real Ale

LocAle Celebration

Stamps Too, 6th March, 7:30

A Celebration of the Liverpool and Districts LocAle scheme
See page 55 for further details.





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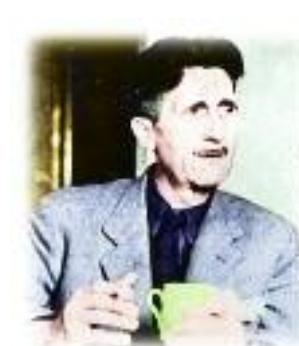




What's in a Name - The Moon Under Water

JD Wetherspoon used the name Moon Under Water for many of their early pubs. The name comes from an essay by George Orwell of 1984 fame, which was published in the Evening Standard newspaper in 1946. This described his imaginary ideal London pub. Wetherspoon founder Tim Martin was greatly influenced by the ten main features of the imaginary Moon Under Water. Below you can read the original essay and decide for yourself how George Orwell influenced the original formula for JDW pubs.



The Moon Under Water by George Orwell Evening Standard, 9 February 1946

My favourite public-house, the Moon Under Water, is only two minutes from a bus stop, but it is on a side-street, and drunks and

rowdies never seem to find their way there, even on Saturday nights.

Its clientele, though fairly large, consists mostly of "regulars" who occupy the same chair every evening and go there for conversation as much as for the beer. If you are asked why you favour a particular public-house, it would seem natural to put the beer first, but the thing that most appeals to me about the Moon Under Water is what people call its **"atmosphere."**

To begin with, its whole **architecture and fittings** are uncompromisingly Victorian. It has no glass-topped tables or other modern miseries, and, on the other hand, no sham roof-beams, ingle-nooks or plastic panels masquerading as oak. The grained woodwork, the ornamental mirrors behind the bar, the cast-iron fireplaces, the florid ceiling stained dark yellow by tobacco-smoke, the stuffed bull's head over the mantelpiece — everything has the solid, comfortable ugliness of the nineteenth century.

In winter there is generally a good fire burning in at least two of the bars, and the Victorian lay-out of the place gives one plenty of elbow-room. There are a public bar, a saloon bar, a ladies' bar, a bottle-and-jug for those who are too bashful to buy their supper beer publicly, and, upstairs, a dining-room.

Games are only played in the public, so that in the other bars you can walk about without constantly ducking to avoid flying darts.

In the Moon Under Water it is always quiet enough to talk. The house possesses neither a radio nor a piano, and even on Christmas Eve and such occasions the

singing that happens is of a decorous kind. **The barmaids know most of their customers by name**, and take a personal interest in everyone. They are all middle-aged women — two of them have their hair dyed in quite surprising shades—and they call everyone "dear," irrespective of age or sex. ("Dear," not "Ducky": pubs where the barmaid calls you "ducky" always have a disagreeable raffish atmosphere.)

Unlike most pubs, the Moon Under Water sells tobacco as well as cigarettes, and it also sells aspirins and stamps, and is obliging about letting you use the telephone.

You cannot get dinner at the Moon Under Water, but there is always the **snack counter** where you can get liver-sausage sandwiches, mussels (a speciality of the house), cheese, pickles and those large biscuits with caraway seeds in them which only seem to exist in public-houses.

a good solid lunch

Upstairs, six days a week, you can get **a good, solid lunch** - for example, a cut off the joint, two vegetables and boiled jam roll—for about three shillings.

The special pleasure of this lunch is that you can have **draught stout** with it. I doubt whether as many as 10 per cent of London pubs serve draught stout, but the Moon Under Water is one of them. It is a soft, creamy sort of stout, and it goes better in a pewter pot.

They are particular about their **drinking vessels** at the Moon Under Water, and never, for example, make the mistake of serving a pint of beer in a handleless glass. Apart from glass and pewter mugs, they have some of those pleasant strawberry-pink china ones which are now seldom seen in London. China mugs went out about 30 years ago, because most people like their drink to be transparent, but in my opinion beer tastes better out of china.

The great surprise of the Moon Under Water is its garden. You go through a narrow passage leading out of the saloon, and find yourself in a fairly large garden with plane trees, under which there are little green tables with iron chairs round them. Up at one end of

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the garden there are swings and a chute for the children.

On summer evenings there are family parties, and you sit under the plane trees having beer or draught cider to the tune of delighted squeals from children going down the chute. The prams with the younger children are parked near the gate.

Many as are the virtues of the Moon Under Water, I think that the garden is its best feature, because it **allows whole families to go there** instead of Mum having to stay at home and mind the baby while Dad goes out alone.

And though, strictly speaking, they are only allowed in the garden, the children tend to seep into the pub and even to fetch drinks for their parents. This, I believe, is against the law, but it is a law that deserves to be broken, for it is the puritanical nonsense of excluding children —and therefore, to some extent, women—from pubs that has turned these places into mere boozing-shops instead of the family gathering-places that they ought to be.

The Moon Under Water is my ideal of what a pub should be - at any rate, in the London area.

(The qualities one expects of a country pub are slightly different.)

But now is the time to reveal something which the discerning and disillusioned reader will probably have guessed already. There is no such place as the Moon Under Water.

That is to say, there may well be a pub of that name, but I don't know of it, nor do I know any pub with just that combination of qualities.

I know pubs where the beer is good but you can't get meals, others where you can get meals but which are noisy and crowded, and others which are quiet but where the beer is generally sour. As for gardens, offhand I can only think of three London pubs that possess them.

But, to be fair, I do know of a few pubs that almost come up to the Moon Under Water.

I have mentioned above ten qualities that the perfect pub should have and I know one pub that has eight of them.

Even there, however, there is no draught stout, and no china mugs.

And if anyone knows of a pub that has draught stout, open fires, cheap meals, a garden, motherly barmaids and no radio, I should be glad to hear of it, even though its name were something as prosaic as the Red Lion or the Railway Arms.



Above - The Moon Under Water Manchester

Below - What's in a Name? Wetherspoon's latest pub The Watch Maker, Prescott.



Brewerynews

Liverpool Organic Acquire Cambrinus Brewery

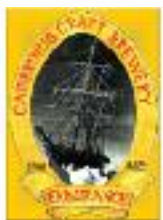
In October 2011 Liverpool Organic Brewery announced the acquisition of **Cambrinus Craft Brewery** on the retirement of founder John Aspinall.



Cambrinus was founded by John in 1997 which makes his brewery the longest established micro in the

region. John developed a superb range of over a dozen distinctive brews that LOB intend to continue brewing using the same sourced ingredients.

Endurance was the first brew using heavy smoked American Oak Chips which impart a slightly vanilla flavour.



The Liverpool Organic website www.liverpoolorganic.com will be updated with a separate section detailing all the Cambrinus beer.

LOB Managing Director Mark Hensby said "Good luck to John on his retirement, rest and play, but please keep in touch: the door is always open. Life begins at retirement"



LCBNZ1

Tahne Mahuta

It could be a personalised number plate but in fact it was the first test brew of a New Zealand hop beer produced by **Liverpool Craft**

Brewery in November. The first test brew was tasted and evaluated by representatives of Liverpool CAMRA who visited the Love Lane brewery under the railway arches. For the tasting the brewery was transformed with tables and chairs to provide a comfortable setting for the tasting surrounded by the brewery fermentation tanks.

The beer is to be called Tahne Mahuta, a Maori word for the largest tree in New Zealand which Maori's regard as sacred and worship.

The reason for choosing to brew a New Zealand hop beer is that LCB brewer Paul Seiffert has a brother in law Adam who has lived in New Zealand for five years. Paul visited for a month and saw the Tahne Mahuta tree. He was already a fan of the distinctive New Zealand hops and keen to take the opportunity to use them in a LCB beer.

The new beer uses Nelson Sovain hops for flavour and Green Bullet for aroma. There are plans for the production brews to be dry hopped. The fresh hops are seasonal and in short supply so the production brews are likely to utilise the pelletised versions which are easier to obtain. The LCB copper has a centrifuge and whirlpool which makes it easier to use pellets.

For the tasting LCB also provided their new beer Icon which has now appeared widely in local pubs.



Wins for Hawkshead and Peerless

Windermere Pale Ale (WPA) won the Overall Champion Beer Award at the

Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Northern Area Beer Competition held in Manchester in October. WPA also won Gold in the Standard bitter category and Hawkshead New Zealand Pale Ale



Slake won silver and Marble Brewery won Bronze with **Manchester Bitter**.

Hawkshead Windermere Pale had been one of the beers featured at the Liverpool CAMRA Womens Beer and Food Tasting event at the Dispensary and featured in the Winter 2011 edition of MerseyAle.

Peerless Progression

Peerless Brewery of Birkenhead won a fistful of awards in the Bottled Beers category. At the SIBA competition.

Jinja Ninja won Gold in the bottled Specialist Beers category before going on to win the overall Champion Bottled beer of the North Award. The beer is brewed with root ginger, chillies and lemons.

Peerless were back on the Awards podium receiving a one two in the Golden Bottled Beers category with **Hilbre Gold** taking gold in the Bottled Golden Ales

category and **Viking Gold** receiving Silver.



Okells Buys 15 Pubs in Yorkshire

Okells part of the Isle of Man Heron and Brearley company which operates the brewery and Okells pubs in the Isle of Man, Liverpool and Chester, has taken over the well regarded Yorkshire based Market Taverns pub group. Of the 15 pubs an impressive 13 are in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide. The pubs majored on real ale from micro breweries and quality home cooked food. Examples are **Brigantes** in York, the **Narrow Boat** Skipton and the **Swan on the Stray** Harrogate.



Market Town Taverns was founded in 1999 by Ian Fozard to develop a small, quality chain of bars which were free from brewery tie and offered a wide range of traditional and specialist beers, a good selection of wine and excellent food. He was the banker who funded Enterprise Inns as it grew to be the biggest pub company in the country.

Ian Fozard said: "We are pleased that the values and unique customer proposition which have contributed to our success during the past 12 years have been recognised by Heron & Brearley, an operator that shares our own view that quality of service and product are paramount in today's difficult trading environment.

"I am confident our joint expertise and the support of our dedicated staff will help realise our respective business aspirations and lead to continued success and growth."

"I would also like to thank our 30 or so shareholders who supported me in 1999 when I formed the company. I am pleased that Market Town Taverns is in good hands with new owners who share our operating philosophy."

It said that there would be **"no fundamental change"** at Market Town Taverns with Ian Fozard having agreed to remain in post for at least 12 months. It will become Heron & Brearley's operational vehicle in the UK.

Steven Taylor the Heron and Brearley Retail Director commented that this was **"an acquisitional package of rare calibre"**, and that the longer term aim is for Okells to expand across the North of England. He said *"Market Town Taverns is a well-run operation and its business model, with a strong focus on delivering excellent customer service complements our own philosophy."*

Heron & Brearley currently operates a managed estate of 48 pubs, 43 in the Isle of Man, four in the north west of England (of which three are in Liverpool and one in Chester) and one in Wales. Its portfolio includes an in-house brewery, Okells, founded in 1850 and producing award-winning beers as well as being the Island's largest drinks wholesaler.

Recent visits to the Brigante in York showed few changes and no evidence of Okells branding or beers. It will be interesting to see to what extent Okells beers appear in the Yorkshire pubs.



Hydes has announced that it will be closing its grade II listed Queens Brewery.

The Manchester brewer employs 50 staff at its site in Moss Side. The move to another location will result

in the loss of a number of jobs and the company is consulting with all staff concerned.

Hydes is one of the few British regional breweries that is still owned and managed as a family business, with an estate of 66 managed and tenanted pubs across the north west, producing 60,000 barrels a year.

The historic Queens Brewery, which was built in 1861 (Hydes took it over in 1899), is according to Hydes no longer able to meet the challenges of today's market.

Hydes will be investing around £2m in the new base with plans to move by late 2012. They have yet to confirm a new site for their new brewery and base.

The new facility will focus exclusively on the production of beers targeted at the growing cask ale sector. This will include **Hydes Original** and **Manchester's Finest** as well as a diverse range of **seasonal** and **themed craft ales**.

Chris Hopkins, Hydes' managing director, said: "This was a very difficult decision for us to take and although it will be sad to see brewing end at Queens Brewery, it is simply not sustainable."

"The site was built over 150 years ago and is not able to meet the challenges of efficient production and distribution of beer in the 21st century. Given the imminent conclusion of a major contract brewing arrangement the site is not suitable for the company's future requirements, particularly given the level of maintenance expenditure which will only increase as time goes by."

"We very much regret the likelihood of job losses, but in order for the company to remain competitive in a very challenging sector there is no realistic alternative."

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St Helens Pub Gains Listing in CAMRA NATIONAL INVENTORY



The Wheatsheaf

Mill Lane, Sutton Leach,
St Helens

has now been listed in the
CAMRA National Inventory of
Unspoilt Pub Interiors – one of
only 200 pubs listed
nationwide.

This relatively recent discovery
was built in 1932 for Greenall
Whitley and is a brick and half-
timbered roadhouse,
remarkable for retaining six
separate rooms largely intact.
They are named in etched
glass in the doors and range
from the public bar (front left),
through a buffet (front right)
to a dining room (rear right).
Two Cask ales are available.



See the entry on the Heritage
Pubs web site
www.heritagepubs.co.uk.

ROSCOE HEAD

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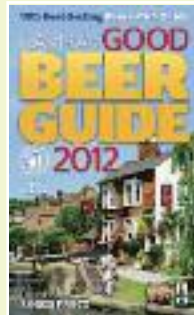
The Roscoe Head is a true English public house with lots of character. One of the few pubs in Liverpool and indeed Great Britain to have survived the onslaught of the super pub chains and remains unspoilt. With a recent sympathetic refurbishment, which has still managed to retain its original character,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

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

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



www.roscoehead.co.uk



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LIVERPOOL PUBS REMEMBERED

Our correspondent "The Bounder" has sent further memories of Liverpool pubs connected with Liverpool shipping lines

The Cornmarket and the Bulls Head off Fenwick Street

Today these two pubs are knocked through into one pub named the Cornmarket. Originally they were two separate pubs back to back, hence in today's Cornmarket the two front doors either side of the building.

The Bulls Head

This was a small pub which was notable for a striking wall painting of Liverpool City Centre (if you know what became of it email merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk). It was a small pub which was "an open collar pub" whilst the Cornmarket was very much "collar and tie". Licensee Esther ruled the Bulls Head and ensured standards were observed.

The Cornmarket – The Law of the Sea

This was a favourite haunt of Mersey Pilots on return from duty at the Bar or Port Lynas and was also popular with Elder Dempster and Blue Funnel staff from the nearby India Buildings. The main room featured carved wood panelling from the Reina Del Pacifico liner which sailed from Liverpool to South America. This is still there today but regrettably has been stained black hiding its original attractive natural wood finish.

The pub had a close escape during the May 1941 blitz when a near miss destroyed adjacent buildings hence the 1950s buildings around today's pub.

The Cornmarket was part of the Robley Group and unusually for Liverpool sold Truman's beers which were served only by the half (a glass). The pub was strictly men only at lunchtimes closing from 3pm to 5.30pm and closed on Sundays.



A further feature was the existence of a pub beneath the Cornmarket, **the Hanbury**, named after the Truman Hanbury and Buxton brewery. This later became the well known Jennie's Seafood restaurant.

McConnell's Cook Street – A Different Law

From the Law of the Sea to another form of Law, McConnell's was in the same building as the Liverpool Law Society and attracted many lawyers. A courtyard separated it from the adjacent pub the Crocodile.

McConnell's was another men only "collar and tie pub", with customers including Everton FC

player Billy Cook and the Waterloo and England rugby player Dick Uron. The licensee was Mrs Lyon and the pub was well known for its Draught Bass.

The Bounder joined Clan Line in 1956 at the age of 16 and worked in the India Department. MerseyAle thanks him for sharing his pub memories.

Now over to YOU

email memories and Pictures of Liverpool pubs to merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

And Finally – The Bounder has one for our Isle of Man Readers

- Which Isle of Man Steam Packet ship was known as the "Black Pig"?
- Which as "the Yacht" and
- Which sole survivor of the classic IOMSPC steamers may soon finally be scrapped?

Answers Page 54.



Soon to scrapped sole sutrvivor © Tom Phillips 2010

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HOME IS WHERE THE (DRAGON) HEART IS IN PRAISE OF LIVERPOOL PUBS

"What's it like in Walton, Woolton or Widnes. Where's Whiston and how frequent are the buses?" These are some of the questions we were asking ourselves in Autumn 2007 after my wife, Bev, and I made the decision to move back to Merseyside. We were living in Lincolnshire and the logistics of looking at districts and house hunting usually involved a stay in Liverpool city centre. Initially we felt like tourists, both having moved to Wirral at an early age, and leaving Merseyside in our 20s. I knew where the football grounds were but not much else. The ground work took us through the year of culture and we both feel so lucky to have been a part of that.

Pub Junkies

In October 2007, Bev and I set foot in our first city centre pub for decades, **Ma Egertons**, and it was there that our journey of discovery began. That first weekend we visited **The Philharmonic**, **The White Star**, **Dr Duncans** and we became Pub-junkies. We were hungry to see what each new venue offered. From the mad-



house atmosphere of the **Ship and Mitre** on a Friday evening to the peaceful back room of the **Roscoe Head** on a Saturday afternoon. We witnessed the intimate closeness of the **Globe** and the kaleidoscope of humanity in **Ye Cracke**. When we couldn't get tickets for the Liverpool Beer Festival, we went to



the one held in **The Dispensary**. And we still marvel at the Steptoe-and-Son-esque furnishings in **Peter Kavanagh's**. Each visit to the city literally opened new doors.

The Peoples' Pubs

And let's not forget the people. I had always classed myself as a Scouser in exile, but I had been away too long. The ease with which conversations started with strangers shouldn't have surprised me really. I now find myself doing exactly the same thing.

It didn't take long before we could navigate round the city centre the way my Grandad did many years ago; from pub to pub. "Go past **The Midland** and **The Central** to the top of the street and turn right, keep walking to **The Dispensary** then turn left, up the hill past **The Fly in the Loaf**, right at the **Philharmonic** and **LIPA** is 100 yards on your right. What, you're from out of town? Then your best bet's a taxi!"

I equipped myself with a copy of Mike Chapple's, **The Great Liverpool Pub Crawl**, I learned about the history of Cains brewery and we joined CAMRA, Liverpool Branch, obviously.

Cold Turkey in Lincoln

I almost went into a depression when we were back in Lincoln and

I even stopped using our local there. Well, if you've tasted smoked-salmon you wouldn't go back to pilchards would you? Trips to stay overnight in Liverpool were being planned with alarming frequency. As a regular at the football, I usually made the return trip in a day, but you can't have a drink. My pub addiction was all consuming, I needed a regular fix. Cold-turkey wasn't an option. We had to move west, and soon. And we did, in November 2009.

The Homecoming

That first week-end in our new home, when we should have been unpacking, saw us in **The Lion** and **Rigbys**. And that is pretty much how our weekends begin these days. After starting new jobs, taking up new hobbies and still going to matches, we always make time for at least a couple of "bevies" in one of the many fine old pubs that Liverpool has to offer. We now meet members of our family who come over from Wirral. I love the fact that I can show them round some of our favourite haunts and talk with a degree of knowledge about many of them. They are always eager for me to arrange the next trip.

We have met the most interesting people and some of the most bizarre. We have trodden in the footsteps of legends and used the same toilet as John Lennon; heard ghost stories and tall-tales; we have witnessed history at first hand and feel part of it ourselves.

It's over 2 years since we moved and it's been great. Now the hardest question I have to answer is "Which pub do you want to go to first."

Steve Sharp



Isle of Man CAMRA
welcomes you to the

1st

"Real Ale of Man" Beer Festival

Thu 12th to Sat 14th April 2012



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Over 60 Real Ales
plus Ciders, Perries &
Fruit Wines

Masonic Hall
Woodbourne Rd
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Isle of Man
IM2 3EE

And a real opportunity to explore beers from

'The Seven Kingdoms of Mann'

Thu 12th April - Preview evening
Corporate, Trade & CAMRA members only
16.00 - 23.00 hr

Fri 13th & Sat 14th April
General Public & all CAMRA members
-Open sessions
12.00 - 15.30 & 16.30 - 23.00 hr

Travel details to the Isle of Man

www.gov.im/transport/airport
www.steam-packet.com
www.thompson-travel.com

Public Transport - Masonic Hall

Isle of Man Transport Bus leaving
Stand D, Lord St Bus Terminal
Nos. 3,11,12,22,23, & 25
(day every 10 mins &
evening every 30 mins)
Fares approx £1.00

Evening entertainment...

- ◆ Meet the Brewers 'What's Brewing?' followed by Q & A session
- ◆ Local Live Music Fri & Sat nights

Public entry - only £3.00 per session

Free* - with refund if you join CAMRA at the Beer Festival

Free* - to all CAMRA members
(*with valid Membership Card)

Age restriction 16+
Blue badge parking/Trained assistance dogs welcome



Contact details and further information...

Event Organiser: charlesmiller@manx.net and on 07624 307356
Visit online - www.islambierfestival.com
www.facebook.com/groups/iamCAMRA
(& use Facebook to contact Staffing Officer - John Wheeler)



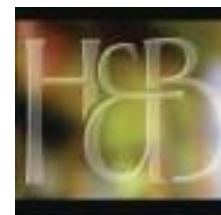
ManxAle



First CAMRA Isle of Man Beer Festival

The Isle of Man CAMRA Branch is to host its first beer festival between **Thursday 12th April and Saturday 14th April, in The Masonic Hall, on Woodbourne Road, Douglas.** This is a large building set back, located a couple of hundred yards further along the road from The Rosemount Terrace shops.

Festivals are a key mechanism for CAMRA to promote real ale, and generate enthusiasm and campaigning funds. As such the Isle of Man Branch, one of the smallest in the British Isles, invites all along to this first Festival. Unlike the 2010 Members Weekend and Conference held in The Villa Marina, this festival is fully open to the general public, and hosted largely for the general public. Some sixty ales will be available at the festival. For details see left.



Heron & Brearley (H&B) Stride Forward

Major Pubs Acquisition in Yorkshire

In what is the most significant development for real ale in several years on the Isle of Man, Heron & Brearley has secured what Retail Director Steven Taylor describes as "an acquisitional package of rare calibre". H&B has acquired Market Town Taverns for an undisclosed sum. Market Town Taverns operate 15 managed houses in the North and West Yorkshire area. Full story see page 27.

H&B Culture Shift

Within H&B there appears to have been a significant shift in culture in terms of the company's approach to real ale and management of the pub stock. The acquisition of Market Taverns is just the latest example. Mr Taylor is frequently reported to be out and about within the H&B pub estate on Island, not only absorbing information from ground level, but frequently acting on it and tweaking individual pubs offerings to maximize potential. This refreshing bottom up approach to management can only pay dividends in the medium term.

Flexibility on Guest Ales

On Island, as reported in earlier issues, guest ales have now been firmly embraced within the group, and even advertised in an H&B cask



ale leaflet this year - something that would just not have been done in former years. It is currently reported that cask sales from Okells are robust, possibly in double digit figures, and Okells ales are appearing more widely in the U.K. market.

Island Pubs

Turning to the Island's pub stock, a large number of the managed houses have now become firmly established in providing several cask ales, some certainly now matching the best of the free houses. The pubs featured below demonstrate this trend and give a flavour of the positive developments under way, which are often led by landlords/landladies at ground level. What is particularly pleasing for the

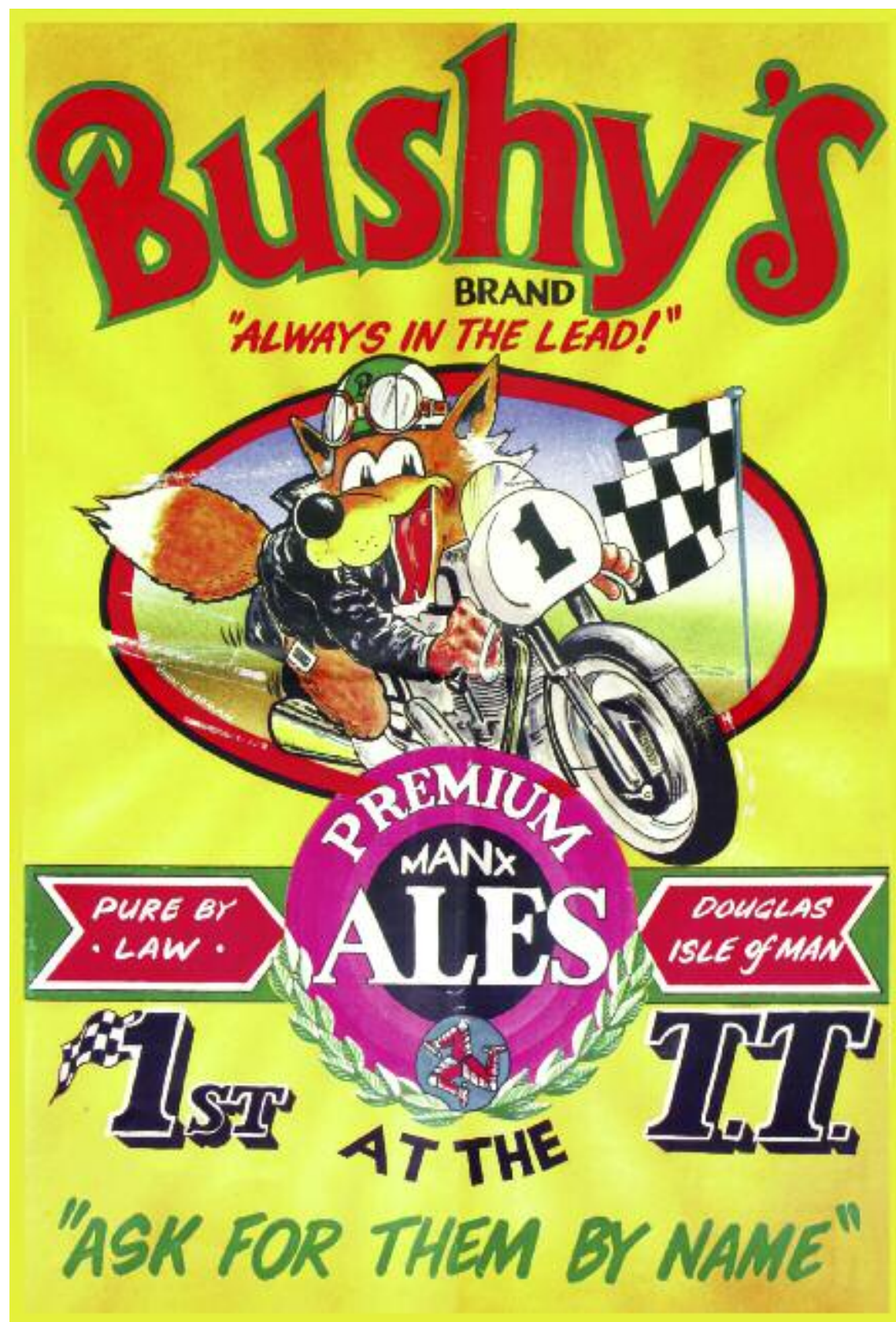
cask ale fan, is the lack of a corporate dictat in terms of what to stock, thereby leading to promotion of beer choice and increasing variety between the H&B pubs.

The Prospect Douglas Ten guest ales a week



Under the management of Roy Kilgallon who is a vastly experienced licensee with more years under his belt than one would dare to remind him of, the Prospect has fully utilised the newly installed hand pumps offering up to ten guest ales a week. For three weeks every month, local customers have input into the guest selection, with Roy choosing his own preferences in the remaining week. The policy here is to largely focus on guest ales, but Okells Bitter remains the most popular choice.

The Prospect lies in the heart of the Island's financial district, and is relatively unaffected by the tourist trade. It has in recent years had a reputation for being somewhat expensive and uncompetitive on real ale pricing, however this has been addressed. The brewery has absorbed some recent price increases, with Roy successfully arguing that customers shouldn't have to pay more, just because the pub is in an affluent part of the town. Similarly, with the lunchtime food on offer between noon and 2.30pm, there is a competitive menu including a daily special for £5.



As reported in the last edition sales of cask ale are increasing after the installation of the additional hand pumps. There is a real sense of team effort in The Prospect, and not just on the beer front. This large open plan outlet is invariably well presented and spotlessly clean, and a frequent finalist in the local CAMRA Pub of the Year competition.

The Woodbourne Hotel Alexander Road Douglas

In sharp contrast to the policy at The Prospect, The Woodbourne Hotel generally stocks a wide range



of Okells bitters, more than any other establishment on the Island, although two or more guest ales can sometimes be found.

Okells now traditionally hold a launch night for the Christmas seasonal, **St Nicks**, which was this year hosted by The Woodbourne. The St Nicks brew is a 4.5% dark



coloured beer with a slightly sweet taste and a fruit and malt aroma. Both the launch and the brew are proving to be extremely popular. The brewery went to town this year, with enormous St. Nicks posters displayed in the windows of The Woodbourne, along with an Okells delivery truck on the night complete with

Christmas light display. The Woodbourne staff were in Christmas themed costume, and a huge contingent from the H&B and Okells team supported the event, including head brewer Dr Mike Cowbourne.

Horse and Plough Braddan

Elsewhere, similarly demonstrating the flexible beer policy, The Horse & Plough has now entered the Good Beer Guide, under the stewardship of Alan Carr, who introduced four cask ales on a regular basis. Guest ales are ever changing. Alan had previously been at The Raven in Ballaugh, similarly installing four regular beers.

The Raven Ballaugh

Current landlord at The Raven, Trevor Latus, has maintained the real ale focus, continuing with the Okells unique Ravens Claw brew



made solely for the pub. Trevor has stamped his own mark on The Raven, which now sports a large number of TT photographs on the pub walls, at what is one of the most exciting points on the TT course as bikers take off on the jump over the Ballaugh Bridge.

Manx Arms Onchan

Positioned right at the heart of



Onchan village handy for bus stops, The Manx Arms has now also

gained entry to the Good Beer Guide. A bustling two roomed local, up to four ales are available at peak periods, across the two separate bars. There is a pool area with TV for the sports, as well as an extensive patio area for the smokers. Note the fine clock on the frontage. Unusually for the motorbike crazy Isle of Man, the main bar area features a fascinating range of historic photographs of car racing from as long ago as the mid thirties.

Pub Refurbishment Programme at H&B.



A number of pubs have been selected for refurbishment works in the coming months. **The Union** (Castletown) has already been completed, changing the character of the pub beyond recognition, so that it is now unlike any other H&B



pub on the Island. It now has white wooden panelled features with light green carpeting and décor in some areas. A room to the rear of the building has been converted into a dedicated TV area for the sports, and a small back bar has been added. A feature has been made of the Manx stone supports in the main bar, with the stonework having been varnished. Two real ales remain available as before, Okells bitter and a guest/seasonal.

The Rover's Return

Sunday - Thursday 12-11 Friday - Saturday 12-12

ROVERS BEER FESTIVAL

Friday 9th March to Saturday 17th March




50 GUEST
REAL ALES

8 REAL CIDERS

**EXTRA
BAR
WITH BEER
TOKENS
FOOD
12 TILL 2**

Guy the licensee Welcomes you to the Rovers Return Beer Festival
ADDITIONAL BAR FOR THE FESTIVAL
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CAMRA ISLE OF MAN BRANCH

JOIN US !!!



The Branch runs an active programme of socials, pub visits, award events and meetings across the Island throughout the year.



For details see the Branch website www.isleofmancamra.org.uk
 Or phone or email the Branch Contact Angela Aspin
 Phone +44 7624 491613 email angelajaspin@manx.net

**SEE PAGE 34 FOR DETAILS OF THE FIRST ISLE OF MAN
CAMRA BEER FESTIVAL**

THURSDAY 12TH TO SATURDAY 14TH APRIL 2012
 MASONIC HALL WOODBOURNE ROAD DOUGLAS

Work is about to get underway on an extensive refurbishment of **The Horse & Plough** Braddan mentioned earlier, and there are plans for **The Bridge** on the North Quay in Douglas, including proposals for up to four hand pumps to be installed. **The Swan** in Ramsey and **The British** an imposing pub on Douglas north quay are also being considered for refurbishment works.

The Ship in Castletown

Finally from the Okells camp, and



still one of the youngest landladies in the British Isles, let alone the Isle of Man, Ami Fargher has moved to The Ship in Castletown. Having worked previously at The Rosemount, and Railway (both Douglas) and the Clarendon on Douglas quay (no real ale), Ami wasted no time and asked the brewery for an extra hand pump at The Ship, which as a final piece of evidence of the new Okells "can do" approach, was granted within 48 hours. MerseyAle wishes her well at this friendliest of locals.

Rovers Return Douglas Beer Festival in March

Following a short notice postponement last November, The Rovers is delighted to report that its second beer festival is back on track,



with dates of Friday March 9th to Saturday March 17th. Hugely popular first time round, a similar

format will be used this time, splitting the ales over two bars. See advert on page 38.

Bushys Brewery New Ales Set to Continue

In 2011 a **Silverdale** brew was made to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Bushys brewery on The Isle of Man. Using what is believed to be the first Manx grown barley for over fifty years, the brew proved so popular it is intended to be continued at regular intervals in the future.

Not ones to rest on their laurels for long, late in 2011 the brewery made another entirely new ale to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Royal British Legion. At 4% with an ABV of 1040, the brew is made using Amarillo, Magnum and Summit hops. As with Silverdale, the brew has proved popular, and is likely to feature again, although possibly appearing under a slightly different name, now that the anniversary has passed.

The Colour(s) of Money

Real ale pricing at a remarkable £1.95 a pint in **Colours bar** on Douglas promenade as reported in the last edition has proved unsustainable. Although remaining very competitive price wise at Colours, it appears that the £2.00 pint will not be seen on the Island outside promotional offers post 2011 and that it was a step too far for 2012 and beyond.

Sidings Castletown Has the Full Dozen!

The Sidings pub in Castletown, has recently increased its number of hand pumps to a dozen after an extensive refurbishment of the pumps with the work being carried out by Heron & Brearley.

This stalwart free house is now operated by Dave Sayle, who took the decision to increase the beer range a year or so into his tenure at the pub. As well as three Bushys beers and Okells bitter, eight guest ales are now available. Some redecorating work was also underway at the pub at time of visit, and a further report will appear in a future edition.

Sams Bar Returns to Real Ale!

After a prolonged absence, this popular bar at the end of the Strand shopping street in Douglas, has surprisingly returned to real ale featuring more than one hand pump. Some years ago, the pub



kept a solitary but superbly well kept pint of Courage Directors, much lamented once it was removed.

Blowing in the Wind

Finally, no sign of the new pub sign at **The Haven** in Port Erin.. Perhaps just as well. The weather on Isle of Man was so windy in December that it would most likely have blown away for a second time.

IOM Reporting by Dave Halliwell

Manx Grand Prix Helicopter Fund Bus TT Pub Course Tour Report by Rosie Christian

Thank you to all who supported the Annual Manx Grand Prix Rescue Helicopter Fund Bus trip on Saturday 19th November. We had a great day out, starting traditionally at The Headquarters of the Rescue Helicopter Fund HQ, The Sulby Glen Hotel at 1.00pm and returning there at 11.00pm, having had a pint in every pub along the course plus the Cat With No Tail and the Baltic Foxfield.

Many thanks to Lorraine for the great supper at the Tynwald St Johns and to all the guys at the Baltic for making us so welcome once again.

All in all we raised £537 for the Helicopter.
 So a big Thank You to All

Rosie Christian

WATERLOO BEER FESTIVAL

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Waterloo Road, Waterloo L22 1RE

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160 Microbrewery
Beers**

Over 50 Real Ciders
Food - Music - Jazz All Day Sunday

Tickets may be available on the door but advance ticket purchase advised for Friday & Saturday Night



Session Days & Times

Thursday Evening
6:00pm - 10:30pm £5

Friday Afternoon
12:00pm - 4:30pm £5

Friday Evening
6:00pm - 10:30pm £6

Saturday Afternoon

12:00pm - 4:30pm £5

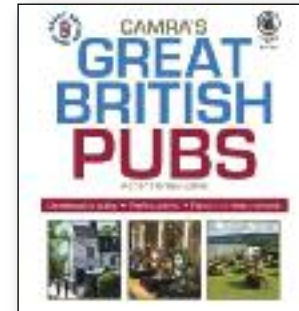
Saturday Evening
6:00pm - 10:30pm £6

Jazz Sunday
12:00pm - 9:00pm £5

Entrance price includes festival
glass and programme

Buy Tickets online at: www.waterloobeerfestival.com

CAMRA's Great British Pubs New Book



CAMRA's Great British Pubs (RRP £14.99 Paperback, members price £12.99)
Newly published this is a definitive collection of the must-visit pubs that can be found from the tip of Cornwall to the Scottish Highlands.

Compiled by internationally-acclaimed beer writer Adrian Tierney-Jones (author of 1001 Beers You Must Try Before You Die) the book's categorised reviews detail over 200 public houses of all shapes and sizes that represent the best of this British institution.

Recent research shows 76% of adults in the UK think that the pub makes an important contribution to British life and when asked about why he wanted to write a book on the subject Tierney-Jones explained:

'The British Pub is a unique institution and despite many efforts to replicate it throughout the world its heart is in these islands — and the other unique aspect of the pub is that it's also the only place where

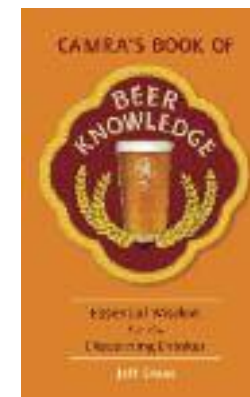
you can drink cask beer; you cannot do it at home unless of course you live in a pub. I'm a writer; I like pubs and beer. It's a no-brainer.

'All these pubs have something to offer beyond the promise of good beer, great food and plenty of cheer. They also offer a chance to step into another world for a while.

'I visited the majority of the pubs, while the others were recommended to me by friends, colleagues and CAMRA members. Some will agree, some will disagree, but that's the beauty of the British pub, it stirs the emotions, and makes people care.'

The book is helpfully organised into 23 themed chapters of ten pubs each, such as Riverside Pubs, Country Pubs, City Centre Pubs, Food Pubs, Family Pubs, Railway Pubs, BrewPubs and Award Winners, making it easy to find the type of pub you like. There is an excellent index and each chapter has a national map showing the pub locations and page numbers of the pub entry. Written in an engaging style which brings more than a few smiles, it is excellent as an armchair reference work to Britain's great pubs or as an essential guide to planning future pub exploration. Either way you won't go wrong with this book.

It is available to buy from the CAMRA shop (www.camra.org.uk/shop), and major book retailers.



CAMRA's Book of Beer Knowledge
The essential source of pub trivia ammunition
Pocket-sized book of beer wisdom returns for second edition

Compiled by award-winning beer writer Jeff Evans, this must-have title for lovers of pub ammo

contains more than 200 entries covering the serious, silly and the downright bizarre from the world of beer. Packed with beer facts, records, stats and anecdotes, CAMRA's Book of Beer Knowledge reveals everything from the smallest pub in Britain to how to say 'cheers' in 26 different languages.

Some of the unusual facts contained in the book include;

- China produces the most beer of any country in the world (410.3 million hectolitres each year)
- Home-brewing is still illegal in Alabama and Mississippi, USA
- Buddhist monks in Thailand have built an entire

temple from old beer bottles

- The longest pub name in the UK is 'The Old Thirteenth Cheshire Astley Volunteer Rifleman Corps Inn'

Jeff Evans, author of CAMRA's Book of Beer Knowledge, said:

'I've always been fascinated by facts and figures so it's been a great pleasure to put together tables and charts showing lots of information beer and pub lovers will hopefully find useful. At the same time, I've been looking at the crazy side of beer production - the wacky facts and oddball bits of trivia that sum up the fun of beer drinking around the world.'

'In addition to compiling lists of best-selling beers, important hop-growing regions and other hard facts, I've been discovering a beer in Australia that is made for dogs and the Japanese beer made with barley grown in space, as well as unearthing the truth about names such as Samuel Adams and JD Wetherspoon. It's been great fun.'

CAMRA's Book of Beer Knowledge is available now from the CAMRA Shop (www.camra.org.uk/shop) and all good retailers, priced £7.99.

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City Centre: Grapes (Roscoe Street) L1 Belvedere (Sugnall St) Roscoe Head, Ship And Mitre, Pilgrim, Vernon, Ye Cracke, White Star, Philharmonic Hall (Grand Foyer Bar) The Font (L1) Mello Mello (L1) The Hub **Elsewhere:** Cat & Fiddle (Bootle) Brewery Tap, Bridge Inn (Chester) The Angel (Manchester) Helter Skelter (Frodsham) Turks Head (St Helens) Guest House (Southport) Clarence Hotel (New Brighton) Cock & Pullet, The Open Arms (Birkenhead) Stamps Too, Old Bank (Waterloo) Edinburgh Sandown Lane (Wavertree) Stanley Arms (Ormskirk) Cheshire Cheese (Wallasey Village)

Liverpool Organic Brewery supply a varied range of Bottled Conditioned Beers - Imperial Russian Stout · Kitty Wilkinson · Joseph Williamson Tunnale · William Roscoe · Honey Blond · Liverpool Pale Ale · Shipwreck IPA · 24 Carat Gold

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

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

Liverpool pubs feature in Great British Pubs Book



Three Liverpool Pubs Feature In Great British Pubs Book
Unsurprisingly the **Philharmonic Hotel** appears under the Heritage Pubs chapter.

"If you have never been before be

prepared to have your breath taken away with the sheer extravagance of the design. This is the pub as a piece of art.

All this splendour gives the place a reverence not usually found in a pub... voices murmur rather than shout."

The **Baltic Fleet** appears in the Brew Pubs chapter
"The Baltic Fleet stands alone.... It is the sole brew pub in the city. The pub gives a real sense of



Liverpool's sailing past... It's not hard to imagine the rough and tumble of sailors waiting to go to sea whilst sinking a few pints."

The **Roscoe Head** is recognised as one of Britain's Magnificent Seven pubs appearing in the Best at Success chapter, the only seven pubs to have been in every edition of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

"A stunning example of a city back street boozer that has never lost its charm, comfort or dedication to good beer. Comfort, conversation, good beer and a decent plateful of food. The Roscoe Head has it all. Long may it continue."



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|  Hop Beast 4.0% Pale - Vienna malt, Cascade Hops |  ICON Dark 4.8% Porter - 6 malts inc. smoked & finest coffee beans |  Viking 4.2% Amber coloured, packed with Willamette Hop flavour |  ICON 3.8% Ballys pale session bitter - citrus finish |  IPA 5.0% Darker Pale as IPAs should be. Bitter and hoppy |  Tane Mahuta 4.4% Pale - New Zealand Beer. Green Bullet hops |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|

Ship in a Bottle

New World Beer Shop for Liverpool Opens



As trailed in the Winter 2011 edition the Long anticipated Ship and Mitre beer shop opened on December 17th, bringing to conclusion an exercise that had started seven months previously

The new shop is cleverly named **Ship in a Bottle** and is currently offering 250 different beers from around the world, including British real ales, in addition to 28 bottled ciders. The intention is for the beer range to be flexible with weekly changes to attract repeat visitors. It is also intended to feature beers from breweries that have their beers on sale at the Ship and Mitre pub, thereby giving an opportunity to purchase bottles of beers you have enjoyed in the pub.

The shop is small and triangular inside but excellent use is made of the space with high wooden shelving along the walls divided into bays for British, Belgian, German USA, World Beers and



some wines and spirits plus bottled ciders.

Shop staff are able to give advice on the beer range and to make recommendations. The shop will soon have its own website with a full list of beers for sale and news of new arrivals. There are multiple bottle deals which offer a good discount on the individual bottle price.

Ben Garner licensee of the Ship and Mitre and driver behind the new venture said;

“The aim is to offer as wide a range of world beers as possible and to encourage customer suggestions regards beers we might stock. Already we are finding we have regular customers who are keen to purchase different beers and to check for the new arrivals.”

Plans for the future include the possibility of a second shop which would major on World Beers, enabling the Whitechapel shop to concentrate on British Beers and Ciders.

The beer shop is clearly a facility that Liverpool has been crying out for, especially as Southport has the impressive Inn Beer Shop on Lord Street. Now Liverpool has its own city centre beer shop and MerseyAle looks forward to its success.

The Ship in a Bottle is located at 45A Whitechapel L1 6DT next to Café Nero and the junction with Sir Thomas Street. Usefully the shop is also open on Sundays.

Opening hours are;
10 to 6pm Monday to Saturday
11 to 5pm Sundays

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On South Road



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www.spittingfeathers.org

spitting feathers ales
Chester

Pomona Award



Cider and Perry haven in East Sussex hailed for outstanding contribution by CAMRA

**CAMRA National Cider and Perry
Month, October 2011**



Pomona Award 2011 winner-
National Collection of Cider and
Perry, Middle Farm, Firle, Lewes,
East Sussex, BN8 6LJ, 01323 811622,
www.middlefarm.com

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale,
has lauded praise on the National
Collection of Cider and Perry at
Middle Farm, near Lewes, East
Sussex, presenting the outlet with its
Pomona Award 2011 for an
outstanding contribution to the cider
and perry industry.

Presented during CAMRA's National
Cider and Perry Month in October,
the Pomona Award is named after
the Roman Goddess of apples, and is
awarded annually to the individual
or organisation which has done the
most to promote real cider and perry
over the previous 12 months, or
for ongoing work championing
the industry.

In judging the Award this year,
CAMRA's Cider and Perry
Committee received many entries
from across Britain via CAMRA
members and members of the public,
but it was the National Collection of
Cider and Perry, undoubtedly the
biggest permanent showcase of real
cider and perry in Britain under one
roof, who shone out as the
undisputed winner. Also producing
its own cider, Pookhill, the outlet
supplies many pubs and beer
festivals on a wholesale basis.

Andrea Briers, CAMRA Cider and
Perry Committee Chairman, said:
'This formidable collection was a

stand-out winner this year, as no-
where else in Britain offers such a
selection of real cider and perry in
such a variety of styles. For the first
time drinker or the cider enthusiast,
the National Collection of Cider and
Perry is the definitive place to visit to
sample and buy the best produce
from around Britain and learn more
about Britain's historic cider and
perry making industry thanks to the
knowledge of the staff who work at
Middle Farm.'

Rod Marsh, a Company Director at
Middle Farm was delighted to accept
the Pomona Award 2011. He said:

'People's perceptions of cider are
altering, and there's now a wider
audience for the drink. We started
selling cider back in 1981, and have
since strived to showcase it as a drink
of real quality. With the input of the
people who work here at Middle
Farm, we feel we are really getting
somewhere, and at present, we're
showcasing more cidermakers than
ever in our collection.

Cider Pub of the Year Ye Olde Cider Bar

**'one of last surviving cider
houses'**

**Devon pub best in Britain for
cider and perry**

Owned by licensee Richard Knibbs,
winner of last year's CAMRA
Pomona Award, Ye Olde Cider Bar
is recognised as one of only a
handful of cider houses remaining
in Britain and was previously
owned by a series of cider making
families. Ran by Mr Knibbs since the
early 1970's, the pub serves 20-25
real ciders and perries at any one
time, having never held a licence to
sell beer or spirits. Regular ciders
and perries on the bar come from
the likes of Winkleigh, Thatchers,
and Broadoak.

Although the competition was
strong this year in finding Britain's
best cider pub, CAMRA judges
noted how Ye Olde Cider Bar's
friendly and knowledgeable staff,

formidable cider heritage and
impressive range of produce shone
out over the other 3 National
finalists, who were-

- **Royal Oak, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8DF**
- **Penrhyn Arms, Penrhynside, Llandudno, Conwy, LL30 3BY**
- **The Lifeboat, Margate, Kent, CT9 1EU**

Richard Knibbs, Ye Olde Cider Bar
licensee, said:

*'I'm absolutely blown away, and
had no idea I'd won it. It came as a
real shock, but I'm delighted, and it
all comes down to the hard work,
enthusiasm and knowledge of our
pub staff.'*

Sarah Newson, CAMRA Cider and
Perry Committee Vice Chairman
and one of the final judges was full
of praise for the winning pub. She
said:

'I felt that the bar showcased some
of the best cider that Devon has to
offer, which was served by friendly

and knowledgeable staff who went
out of their way to find a cider that
the customer was happy with. All
this, combined with the wonderful,
very rare example of a traditional
cider house setting which harks
back to a bygone era, but which is
welcoming to all ages and both
locals and visitors alike, made this a
truly deserving winner.'

**National Cider and Perry Pub of
the Year 2011 winner Ye Olde
Cider Bar, Newton Abbot, Devon,
TQ12 2LD, 01626 354221**



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Jinja Ninja

Awarded Overall Champion Bottled Beer at the Society
of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Northern Area Beer Competition 2011



Fake Rolex watches, fake Luis Vuitton handbags, fake Nike trainers and now, wait for it fake Liverpool Organic Brewery Ales!!!

Yes, a brewery in the North East of England has been caught selling "replica" Everyman's Ale and William Roscoe, both beer brand names being unique to Liverpool Organic. The infringement came to light thanks to a major social networking site when a pub in West Yorkshire announced in December that it was about to "put on" William Roscoe from Liverpool Organic. But the

breweries scheme was foiled by LOB's chief sleuth Laura "Lolz" Robinson who intercepted the "blog". They have claimed it was a "mistake" that, in their 25 years of brewing, has never happened before, although they have conveniently overlooked that they've done it twice with the same pub. Pictures show the mistaken labelling. Names have been withheld for legal reasons while the company's solicitor decides what action to take, and at the same time Trading Standards have indicated they intend investigating the matter.

It is often said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, well LOB don't think so.

To be continued....



Scottish Government move to introduce minimum pricing for alcohol



The Scottish Government has issued a Bill to introduce a minimum price for alcohol sold on licensed premises. At the same time the Government is calling for evidence from interested parties on the principles of the Bill.

CAMRA welcomes this move which should go a long way to end the practice of supermarkets selling very cheaply and often below cost alcohol to the detriment of the pub trade. Setting a "floor price" below which

alcohol should not be sold and which truly represents the cost of alcohol including production costs as well as duty and VAT will level the playing field between the on and off trade and help curb the continued closure rate of Scotland's community pubs.

Recent research by CAMRA showed that some own brand lagers were being sold by supermarkets in Scotland at as low as 25p an alcohol unit and some 9% super strength lager as low as 31p per unit. However the practice of below cost selling by supermarkets will only finally be ended when the UK Government follows Scotland's lead and introduce legislation of its own to cover the rest of the UK.



Freshfield Stay of Execution But Greene King Plough on the Gastro Pub Plan

The campaign to save the Freshfield community pub has won a temporary reprieve for the popular local which is threatened by plans by owners Greene King for a £500,000 conversion to a "gastro pub", as if the Formby area is in need of yet another food pub. A petition against the conversion

was signed by nearly 1,000 local people and was supported by the MP, local councillors and the press. The clear message to Greene King is that local people want to keep the Freshfield as their community pub serving a good range of real ales and providing a meeting place and function room.

A meeting with Greene King management resulted in a postponement of plans for conversion to start from January 2012 to July. However the application for planning permission has been resubmitted with a date of 12th February for objections.

A temporary manager has been in place since October and has had his stint extended to July 2012.

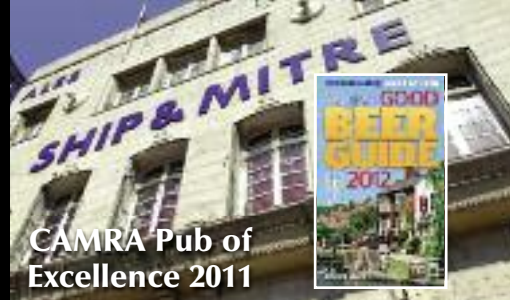
ironically he has revitalised the range and quality of the real ales with often nine guest ales on offer alongside three Greene king beers, the result being that even more people are now using the pub. So the fight continues. Will Greene King see sense and listen to the community?





Beer Festival

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throughout the year



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NATIONAL WINTER ALES FESTIVAL

Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain

ALFIE'S REVENGE

Driftwood brewery's (of St Agnes, Cornwall) 'Alfie's Revenge' has been crowned the Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2012 by a panel of judges at the National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester.

The 6.5% ABV old ale is described in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2012 as a 'strong and fruity, well-balanced premium ale'.

Pete Martin, Driftwood Head Brewer, was taken aback when hearing of the brewery's success. He said:

'We are thrilled to have won. It makes a big difference to us, and will put our brewery on the map, as well as Cornish breweries in general, as there are a lot of good brewers in the county. As a brewpub, we hope the impact on our business will be significant.'

Also in the Overall awards, Silver went to Cairngorm brewery's **Black Gold**, whilst the Bronze medal went

to Coniston brewery's **No 9 Barley Wine**.

Reigning supreme at the Winter Ales Festival, Driftwood's Alfie's Revenge, as well as the Overall finalists, will now enter into the final of the Champion Beer of Britain competition at the Great British Beer Festival, Olympia, London, in August (7th-11th).

Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2012 - Winners List:

Old Ales and Strong Milds category

Gold- Driftwood, **Alfie's Revenge** (St Agnes, Cornwall)

Joint Silver- Nant, **Mwnci Nell** (Llanrwst, Conwy)

Joint Silver- Brunswick, **Black Sabbath** (Derby, Derbyshire)

Bronze- Beowulf, **Dark Raven** (Brownhills, Staffordshire)

Porters category

Gold- Hammerpot, **Bottle Wreck**

Porter (Poling, West Sussex)

Silver- Blythe, **Johnson's** (Hamstall

Ridware, Staffordshire)

Bronze- Sulwath, **Black Galloway** (Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway)

Stouts category

Gold- Cairngorm, **Black Gold** (Aviemore, Highlands)

Silver- Cambridge Moonshine, **Black Hole Stout** (Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire)

Bronze- Acorn, **Gorlovka** (Wombwell, South Yorkshire)

Barley Wines category

Gold- Coniston, **No 9 Barley Wine** (Coniston, Cumbria)

Silver- Moor, **Old Freddy Walker** (Pitney, Somerset)

Bronze- Isle of Skye, **Cuillin Beast** (Uig, Isle of Skye)

OVERALL results

Gold- Driftwood, **Alfie's Revenge** (St Agnes, Cornwall)

Silver- Cairngorm, **Black Gold** (Aviemore, Highlands)

Bronze- Coniston, **No 9 Barley Wine** (Coniston, Cumbria)

Potential alcohol ban on Merseyrail

Plans to potentially ban the carriage of open or alcoholic drinks are being investigated by local rail company, Merseyrail.

This would be similar to the ban that currently exists in London that makes it an offence to consume alcohol on board trains.

The ban would seek to tackle anti social behaviour on the rail network, and would follow the high-profile enforcement campaign against 'feet on seats'. There is no doubt that drunken and

offensive behaviour on board trains is both unpleasant to existing passengers, and a deterrent to potential passengers.



However, the proposal, like so many other measures that seek to deal with excessive alcohol consumption and anti social behaviour, applies a sledgehammer to crack a nut. It is typically the unacceptable behaviour of a small minority that creates problems for the majority.

A blanket alcohol ban on board trains would do little to prevent people from overindulging on cheap alcopops in pubs and bars across the area and then causing problems for other passengers on their journey home.

Banning people who are drunk, incapable and abusive from travelling on the network would obviously be a sensible move. But is banning people from enjoying a simple glass of wine, a bottle of beer or a tot of whisky on their train trip really the right way of dealing with a much wider and more complex problem?

The Turks Head

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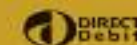
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CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Coach Trips



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

£12

COACH TRIPS 2012

Saturdays

10th March Sheffield

14th April Black Country

19th May Barrowhill Beer Festival
(at the railway centre)

9th June Mid-Wales Llanidloes *

7th July Bishops Castle

4th August Yorkshire

8th September Derby

6th October Broughton-in-Furness Cumbria
Pubs Beer Festival

10th November Hanley Castle – Three Kings
pub beer festival *

Trips marked (*) will probably have a stop on the way, or way home. Suggestions are welcome

Email bookings at
social@merseycamra.org.uk
Or phone Ian 07521 741 586

Pub Survey Trips (Generally evenings on public transport) details below or visit www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

Pub Survey Trips

City centre and suburban trips, as well as a few by coach to those far flung areas of the branch which are difficult to cover by public transport. For the dark winter nights we are going to concentrate on pubs in the City Centre. Trips will, in the main, still occur on the last Tuesday of the month and we will aim to cover four to five pubs per trip. This means we will have at least 40 minutes in each pub and trips will end around 10.30pm. Saveaways will only be issued to beer scorers if a trip involves taking public transport between pubs.

Survey Trips planned for the next six months are:

28th Feb – Hope St University Area – Meet in Clove Hitch 7.00pm

Pubs we will be visiting – Augustus John (7.45pm), Font (8.25pm), Cambridge (9.15pm), finishing at Blackburne Arms (10pm)

27th March – Shopping Area – Meet at Hanover Hotel Hanover St 7.00pm

Pubs we will be visiting – Abbey (7.40pm), Beehive (8.20), Carnarvon Castle (9.10pm), finishing at The Richmond at (9.55pm)

24th April – Bootle – Meet in the Wild Rose 7.00pm
Further details to follow

29th May – Coach trip to Lydiate/Melling/Sefton
Further details to follow

26th June – Crosby
Further details to follow

Should anyone have any ideas for survey trips for the rest of the year, please let me know – we will be visiting the south of the city in the second half of the year.

Sonia James- Henry (survey@merseycamra.org.uk)

Answers to questions on page 31 (IOMSPC ships) - The Black Pig was the Manxman. The Yacht was Mona's Isle. The Manxman the last of the classic steamer line currently in Sunderland, may soon be scrapped despite efforts to preserve her and return her to Liverpool

MerseyAle Credits

Editor

John Armstrong
merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

Layout Design

Dennis W Jones
denwjones@gmail.com

Photographs

Neil Lloyd
www.neillloydphotography.co.uk
neild2x@btinternet.com

Contributors

Dave Halliwell
Helen McCall
Jan Sorsby
Sonia James-Henry
Steve Berks
Steve Sharp
Tony Williams

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Useful Contacts

CAMRA National Office

230 Hatfield Road
St Albans AL1 4LW
01727 867201
camra@camra.org.uk
www.camra.org.uk

Southport CAMRA

Ian Garner 01704 876819
ianjools@hotmail.co.uk
www.southportcamra.org.uk

Wirral CAMRA

Dave Hutchinson 01516 440625
daveandjeanh@ntlworld.com
www.camrawirral.org.uk

Isle of Man Branch Contact

Angela Aspin 01624 491613 -
mobile 07624 491613
angelajaspin@manx.net

Merseytravel Line

for public transport times
0151 638 5002
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Trading Standards 0151 233 3002

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

Liverpool & Districts CAMRA Diary

Liverpool Branch Get Togethers

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



LocAle Celebration, Stamps Too 6th March 7:30

A Celebration of the Liverpool and Districts

LocAle scheme, which was originally launched in Stamps Too 3 years ago. In the company of the Mayor of Sefton, an opportunity to sample some Local beers and help us raise the profile of LocAle. All welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

Thurs (note different day) March 22nd – Branch Get Together at Liverpool Organic's Waterloo Beer Festival.

Free admission to festival but must book place in advance. See website for details – or email contact@merseycamra.org.uk Entry to festival from 6pm, meeting at 7.30pm.

Wed April 18th 8pm Lady of Mann (Rigby's Courtyard) Dale Street

Wed May 16th 8pm TBC (Check Website nearer to date)

Branch committee meetings visit: www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk



How to vote for your favourite Beer and Branch Pub of the Year

Champion Beer of the North West

CAMRA members only please vote for the Champion Beer of North West online at www.cbobvoting.org.uk

POTY QR



Liverpool Branch Pub of the Year

CAMRA members only can vote online for Liverpool Pub of the Year on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk (or scan QR) In person at the Liverpool Beer Festival

Deadline for voting 19th February



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