

MerseyAle

CAMRA LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICTS MAGAZINE

SPRING 2012

FREE



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



"This real ale
goes down well"

Inside:

Liverpool CAMRA
National Membership
Initiative award

Pub of the Year

ManxAle



Circulation 11000

www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

email: merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

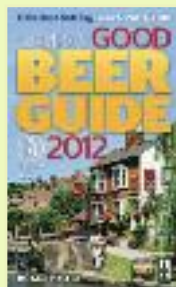
Photograph Neil Lloyd

THE LION TAVERN

www.liontavern.com

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The Lion Tavern (Grade II Listed) is Liverpool's finest Edwardian Pub. It is an extravaganza of etched glass, carved wood and beautiful tiling. It has a wonderful ornate wood carved bar plus two cosy side rooms one with a fantastic stained glass dome. The Lion Tavern is an award winning pub serving excellent cask conditioned ales, cider and a large selection of the finest malt whiskies. You can also enjoy a fine selection of tasty food from our new menu.



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WEEKLY
LOCALE
See Board
for future
Real Ales

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and Cider Just £2.95 a pint

Sean and Michael would like to welcome customers
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See the board for
selection of good
value food from our new
menu

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every Tuesday
at 9.30pm

**BOARD GAME
CLUB**
Meet every Monday at
6.00pm

**ACOUSTIC
NIGHT**
Second Thursday of the
Month 8pm

**BOB DYLAN
SOCIETY**
Meets first Thursday of
the Month 8.30pm

MEET THE BREWER
Third Thursday of the
Month 8pm

**POETRY GET
TOGETHER**
Fourth Thursday of the
Month 8pm

**V6 Adventure
Club**
Meet every Wednesday
at 8.00pm



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Best Pubs in the
country"
Daily Telegraph

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
The Giant Sea Odyssey Uncle
looking for a pint of real ale
Photograph by Neil Lloyd

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

Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle

National Award for Liverpool CAMRA

Our lead story is the success of Liverpool CAMRA in winning the first CAMRA **National Membership Initiative award** (story page 4). The judges were impressed with the innovation shown by Liverpool CAMRA's Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign and its success in attracting new people to real ale with many going on to join CAMRA. In the judges' opinion Liverpool CAMRA ticked all the boxes for the four Award criteria, activation of members, communication, retention of members and innovation.

Liverpool CAMRA is no stranger to national awards, having in previous years won the **National Newsletter of the Year Award** and **most Improved Newsletter Award**, whilst the **Liverpool Historic Pubs Guide** won an Award for Local Pub Guides.

Liverpool CAMRA is a campaigning branch which actively promotes real ale and pubs.

So join us TODAY !!! Page 53

Pubs are under threat as never before (page 23), not least from the rapacious demands of the PubCos, with the result that 12 community pubs are closing every week. The

Save the Pub group which includes CAMRA, is battling to Save the British Pub and its part in community and national life.

Matters are being made worse by the Coalition Government's Beer Escalator policy which raises duty by 2% above the rate of inflation. CAMRA urges you to sign the on line Prime Minister petition to **Stop the Escalator** (see page 21). The Liverpool Pub of the Year is the **Roscoe Head**, one of the Magnificent Seven of British pubs that have been in EVERY edition of the Good Beer Guide (that's since 1974) – see story page 5. And what's more it's in Liverpool the Real Ale Pubs Capital of Britain. Liverpool is blessed with a very special array of real ale pubs.

So visit the Roscoe Head, and join CAMRA on page 53 and help the fight for the British pub !!



John Armstrong Editor

LIVERPOOL CAMRA

Snowball Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign Gains National Membership Initiative Award



Pictured: John Armstrong (Vice Chair) with Jean Pownceby (Branch Contact) from Liverpool Branch accepting the Membership Initiative Award; Keith Spencer (National Membership Secretary); Ian Stringer (Chair Wolverhampton Branch) accepting Initiative Award on behalf of his Branch.

Liverpool CAMRA is the first winner of the new prestigious CAMRA National Award for Membership Innovation. The award was announced and presented to Branch representatives Jean Pownceby and John Armstrong at the CAMRA National AGM and Members Weekend held in Torquay.

Announcing the Award CAMRA National Membership Director Keith Spencer reported that Liverpool and Districts Branch stood out for meeting all the award's four criteria of activation of members, communication, retention of members and innovation. Notable for innovation was the Liverpool Branch campaign **Bringing New people to Real Ale, (AKA Snowball Campaign)** and its success in connecting with and engaging women and young people, two groups that CAMRA nationally is keen to recruit.

The first event was held in January 2011 with a Womens' Real Ale Tasting evening held at the Liverpool Pub of the Year for 2010 and 2011, the Dispensary Renshaw Street. This was fully subscribed with others on a waiting list. Since then a further fourteen events have been held including events for young people and new members. These have been reported in each edition of MerseyAle and can be read on line on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

A related aim of the events has been to encourage new people to visit the pub and enjoy real ale in a

pub environment, thereby supporting Liverpool pubs and overcoming stereotypes that pubs were not for them.

The events have had a significant effect in changing the image of CAMRA in the eyes of many people, demonstrating that it is not a drinking club but a welcoming campaign doing activities to welcome new people and to promote real ale and pubs with an extensive programme of campaign activities and social events. As the national publicity states – very much a Campaign of Two Halves.

The results speak for themselves with a steady flow of new members especially women and young people, including a significant number of joint memberships.

A further innovation has been the **Discovering CAMRA** events targeted at new and prospective members, designed to inform them in a social pub setting of what CAMRA is doing in Liverpool and nationally and how they can become involved. The Award submission report can be read on the Branch website www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk and information on future **Bringing New People to Real Ale** events is available by email from contact@merseycamra.org.uk



"The Snowball Team with Award. John, Helen, Jean and Jan."

Liverpool CAMRA

has above the national CAMRA average for the number of young people in membership



A National Gem The Roscoe Head

Roscoe Street Liverpool City Centre

One of Britain's Magnificent Seven pubs has won the 2012 Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year Award. The Roscoe Head is one of only seven pubs nationwide that have been in EVERY Edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide (that is since 1974). The pub is a National Gem and is a classic example of a Liverpool special characteristic, a small local pub that is in the City Centre. Elsewhere in the country these small pubs have disappeared through redevelopment but happily in Liverpool they remain, adding great character to the city centre.

Yet that is not the reason the Roscoe Head has won this prestigious award. Nor is the fact that licensee Carol Ross has been in the vanguard nationally of the fight for fair treatment of licensees by the PubCos.

The pub features seven real ales including changing guests and two regular beers, **Tetley's Bitter** and unusually for Liverpool, **Jennings Bitter** from Cockerham in Cumbria. Third pint measures are available and you can sample three different beers for the price of a pint. The reasons for the Award are the quality of the real ale served and the total pub environment, both of which are exemplary. A fine ambassador for Liverpool. Few who come here will be disappointed, a fact demonstrated by the glowing write ups in the Daily Telegraph Pint to Pint column and CAMRA's Great British Pubs book.

I could stay here all day

"There is an indefinable sense of comfort about this space. I tune in and out of the conversation but also find myself melting into the traditional and comforting

surroundings. I could stay here all day."

Adrian Tierney – Jones in the Daily Telegraph Saturday 8th October 2011

Much of this is due to the care and dedication shown over the last thirty years by Carol's family who have run the pub throughout this time and maintained the high standards for us all to enjoy. It is a testament to the value of commitment and continuity in the pub trade.



Alistair Houghton of the Liverpool Echo attended the event and below are extracts from his article;

"CAROL ROSS was lost for words when asked what made her petite pub so special. Luckily, her regulars were happy to do the talking.

Just as landlady Carol Ross was telling me about her family's three decades in charge at the Roscoe Head, Niall Bannon walked over, beaming, and handed her a congratulatory card.

"Not only do you consistently serve the best drinks in Liverpool," he had written, "but it is also done with professionalism and friendliness. It is



always a pleasure to visit your pub." Carol, a former manager of the opulent Philharmonic pub up the road, took over in 1997 after her parents, Nicholas and Margaret Joyce, hung up their aprons.

"I'm absolutely delighted at winning pub of the year," she said. "Who wouldn't be?"

"We've won it in my parents' day. But in my day it's always been a runner-up. Until now."

What's so good about it, I asked.

"The clientele," she said, after a pause.

"The good beer. And the standards – the cleanliness."

Sensing her hesitation, a neighbouring drinker couldn't resist chipping in.

"It's got its own unique ambience," said Carl Davis, who visits regularly to savour its friendly quietness. "There's no telly blaring down."

Carol added: "There's no music here, and people like it that way. When we did a refurb a few years ago, we gave customers the option of having music. They gave us a firm no."

Alistair Houghton Liverpool Echo May 3rd 2012



Liverpool CAMRA Branch Chair Geoff Edwards presents the Liverpool Pub of the Year Award to licensee Carol Ross

LIVERPOOL CAMRA

Bringing New People to Real Ale Preview Tasting Event for Women and Young People at Beer Festival

Believe it or not, there are still many people in Liverpool who are not aware of our annual CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival. Many have never even tried real ale! To help rectify these gaps in some people's lifestyle, it was decided to hold a special preview event the night before the festival opened to the public. This built on the success of last year's **Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign**, which introduced many women and young people to real ale for the first time and, it appears, converted them! We asked those people to think of friends and people they know for whom real ale and the festival experience would be new, and bring them along to the event.

It wasn't 'the full Monty' Liverpool Beer Festival as the preview event lasted only two hours and there was a limited range of beers on offer. Obviously the priority was to have the full range in top condition for the paying customers over the next three days. But it proved to be a great success, with over 100 women and young people attending and giving very positive feedback about their new experience.

Highlight – the Hawkshead Brewery Guided Tasting

The highlight of the evening was a presentation by Anne Jones from **Hawkshead Brewery**. Anne captivated her audience with a short history of the brewery and a simple but comprehensive description of the brewing process, followed by an opportunity to sample tasters of four very different beers and to match these with cheeses and, in one case, chocolate! The presentation and sampling

were both very enthusiastically received and, during the latter stage, Anne was able to engage with individuals and small groups to answer specific questions and inspire further interest in beer and the brewing process.

Beer of Merseyside Competition

An innovation for the 2012 Festival was a competition inviting people to select a Beer of Merseyside. All Merseyside brewers were invited to submit one beer for the competition. People at the Preview had the opportunity to choose the '**Beer of Merseyside**'. Samples of one beer from each of the nine Merseyside breweries – **Liverpool Organic, Liverpool Craft, Liverpool One, Wapping and Cains, George Wright, Peerless and Brimstage from the Wirral, and Southport** – were given and people were asked to consider the appearance and aroma of the beer as well as the all important taste and aftertaste. This stimulated a buzz of conversation as views were exchanged about the beers, and several people commented afterwards what a good introduction it had been to real ale as it really encouraged them to think about what they were drinking. They then gave each beer an overall score out of 10.

Winner – Peerless Storr

The winner was **Peerless Storr** with an average score of 8.2. A presentation was made at the brewery some weeks later, attended by some of those who had voted, alongside other CAMRA

members. A most enjoyable evening was had by all and our thanks to brewer Steve Briscoe and staff for their "peerless" hospitality.



Peerless brewer Steve Briscoe (R) with Liverpool CAMRA Chairman Geoff Edwards

More Events

There will be more Bringing New People to Real Ale events coming up and we hope that our festival newcomers will be spreading the word and encouraging others to get involved too. We call this the '**Snowball**' effect (see Page 4) and in just over 12 months, it has brought almost 200 new people to real ale in Liverpool.

Jean Pownceby



Liverpool Real Ale Outlet Tide Flows On Four New Outlets Open In April

Liverpool has seen yet more real ale outlets opening both in the City Centre, and pleasingly in the outlying suburbs of Aigburth, Waterloo and Maghull, with a total of four new pubs opening their doors to real ale in April alone.

Wetherspoons account for two of these as part of their national policy of opening 50 new outlets a year.



The Frank Hornby (see page 33) in Eastway, Maghull and the **Queen's Picture House** in South Road, Waterloo opened on the same day – see stories below. These follow the new Wetherspoons the **Watchmaker** in Prescot and the **Barker's Brewery** in Huyton, which opened last year.

The Old Bank Aigburth Vale

At 301 Aigburth Vale the Old Bank in the former Martin's Bank building has opened opposite the junction with Jericho Lane and the bus stops. This is good news for South Liverpool drinkers especially since the Fullwood Arms on Aigburth Road dropped selling real ale some time ago. The Old Bank is also within walking distance or a short bus ride on the 61 of the very successful **Pi Bar** on Rose Lane which is located close to Mossley Hill station.

The Old Bank is an independent

pub featuring four handpumps serving **Black Sheep** and **Bombardier** as regular beers and two guests which at opening included **Newman's Red Stag**. There is also a good range of foreign bottled beers. Buses 60,61, 68, X1 and the very frequent 82 stop close by. (report by Tony Williams).

Inn Liverpool Renshaw Street

In the City Centre **Inn Liverpool** has opened at 1 Renshaw Street opposite the former Lewis's building. Describing itself as "**a Beer Emporium**" the bar of this independent pub is dominated by foreign keg beer fonts. The four real ale hand pumps are around the side of the bar and not in direct line of sight. One is for cider and the others for changing guests including LocAles, with **Liverpool Organic** being an early example. There is a large range of foreign bottled beers. (Report by Tony Williams).

Queen's Picturehouse Waterloo

The Queen's Picture House in South Road, Waterloo is a few yards from the Waterloo Southport to line Merseyrail station and main bus stops. Manager Mark Lythgoe, previously at Liverpool Wetherspoons pubs, Blacklers, the Welkin and the Merton, Bootle, is keen to promote real ale, and especially LocAle. **Brimstage, Southport, George Wright, Moorhouses, Peerless and Cains** beers will be well represented. During his period at the Merton, Mark increased the sale of real ale from 200 to 900 pints a week. He is also intending to have a monthly "**Meet the Brewer**" event.

The CAMRA corner is very prominent to the right of one of the main doors, and Mark is keen to promote CAMRA membership.

The pub was officially opened on April 17th by the last projectionist to work at the cinema. In more recent years it was a furniture store. For the opening Moorhouses brewed a special 4.5% beer called appropriately "**Old Projectionist**". There is scope for more stress on the history of the building and its cinema links.

It is also pleasing to see that the pub is mainly staffed by local people, which is a deliberate policy. The pub location is next door to the **Old Bank** and a few yards from **Stamps Too**, plus the **Marine** and the **Volunteer Canteen** are a short walk away, so there is a ready made pub. crawl from Waterloo station. (Report by Helen McCall)

CAMRA Southport Beer Festival 2012 New Venue and Dates

Thursday 25th to Saturday 27th October 2012

The Sandgrounder Southport Beer Festival is moving to a new venue the St John's Ambulance Centre Wright Street (3 minutes walk from Southport railway station) with new dates – see above.

CAMRA St Helens Beer Festival

Thursday 22nd to Saturday 24th November 2012

New dates for Festival. See page 11 for St Helens News.

Ship in a Bottle Sails into West Kirby

New Beer Shop Opens

Following the success of the first Ship in a Bottle beer shop in Liverpool Whitechapel, owners the Ship and Mitre have taken the step of opening a second shop – this time in West Kirby on the Wirral. Located at 40 Grange Road opposite the West Kirby railway station, the shop which is also named the Ship and Bottle, is handily placed for

Welcome to the Vernon Arms

www.vernonarms.co.uk

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MerseyAle news continued

passengers coming off the train and is near to The Crescent, the main shopping street. It is also within yards of the Dee Hotel Wetherspoon pub, and a five minute walk up the hill to the GBG listed White Lion pub with its extensive rear sun trap garden, so you can visit the shop and then make a day of it!

The shop was formerly the Hilbre Off Sales and before that Thresher so has a history as an off license.. It is much larger than the Whitechapel branch and will be offering a larger range of beers with a similar theme of British real ales, German, Belgian and other world beers plus a range of ciders. An unusual feature will be a franchised counter selling traditional sweets such as boiled sweets.

The new shop will offer the four bottles for £10 offers and will also stock a larger range of strong beers.

The Waverley Newsagents Banks Road West Kirby

Sells Liverpool Organic and Peerless bottled beers plus a good range of fine wines. You can combine this with a visit to the Hilbre Court real ale pub about five minutes walk along Banks Road.

Freshfield Hotel Freshfield

The long running saga of Greene King's attempts to convert the area's last remaining popular community pub into a gastro pub ignoring strong community opposition, appears to have been defeated. GK have announced that the plans have been postponed and that work planned to start at the end of May will not now proceed. The new licensee is making great strides with the real ales and is dramatically increasing the sales, So take a trip on the Southport train and combine a walk on the Fisherman's path to the sand dunes or a visit to the red squirrel reserve. Another victory for People Power !!

The Pi Bar Rose Lane Mossley Hill Expands

The success story of South Liverpool, the Pi Bar, winner of the Liverpool CAMRA Newcomer of the Year Award 2011, which is close

to Mossley Hill station and on the 61 and 80 bus routes, has responded to its runaway success by



expanding into the next door shop unit. Pi's popularity has been such that most evenings it has been full and standing. The new space will be warmly welcomed by those keen to enjoy the three changing real ales and real cider, alongside a wide range of world bottled and keg beers. MerseyAle will report in future editions about the new look Pi Bar.

The Old Paraffin Oil Shop on Edge Lane, near Old Swan, has been converted to offices. The pub that had not served real ale for years. **The Gardeners Arms** at the top of Broadgreen Road is still closed and up for sale. No doubt this may be another pub loss. It



could have made a good pub for a company like Wetherspoons, but they already have a couple of outlets not far away.

Also now closed and boarded up is the **Royal Oak on Park Road**. Admiral Taverns are advertising for a new tenant. Perhaps if real ale was supplied the pub may have better trade?

The Gardeners Arms Woolton Refurbishment is now completed

The Clove Hitch restaurant on Hope Street has two hand pumps, and welcomes customers just to drink in the bar area. The beers are usually LocAles and has included



Liverpool Craft Brewery beers. You may wish to drop in on the way to or from the nearby Philharmonic (pub or Hall).

The Liverpool 1 Bridewell

is now trading under the sole ownership of one of the previous directors. There are currently three




handpumps, but hopefully this will increase soon.

The Yates's on Allerton Road, Mossley Hill has been rebranded as the John Brodie, in a similar style to the **William Gladstone** in town. Up to three ales can be available, usually from national brands.

The Font, opposite the entrance to the Metropolitan Cathedral, now usually has beers from Liverpool Organic Brewery (LOB). The **Blackburne Arms** on Catherine Street is also another outlet for LOB. A third LOB outlet nearby is the **Grapes** at the corner of Knight Street and Roscoe Street. This pub has also stocked **Tatton Brewery** beers recently.


The Abbey on Hanover Street has been offering CAMRA members a pint for £1.50. Up the road the **Central and Commercial** is now offering beers from Moorhouses as well as the normal Thwaites.



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Blakemere Craft Centre, Chester Road,
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(close to the A556/A49 junction).

PRESENTS

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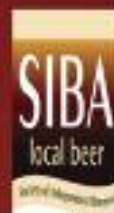
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St Helens CAMRA News

St Helens CAMRA Revamp

A new Branch Committee is driving forward an exciting programme of activities both social and campaigning. A new email newsletter has been launched which is sent to members who have supplied an email address. The news below is taken from the June edition.

Friday 25th May - St Helens CAMRA Awards Night

We held our annual awards presentation night in our Pub of the Year, the Duke of Cambridge, celebrating the wonderful array of pubs we have in our area.

Dave Watts MP agreed to be our special guest and all members were urged to attend this very enjoyable event.

Dates for St Helens Beer Festival

The dates have been selected as Thursday 22nd to Saturday 24th November 2012.

If you would like to help plan the Festival come along to the Festival Planning meetings contact sthelenscamra@hotmail.co.uk Please get in touch if you want to know the time of the next meeting or you want to sponsor a barrel or help in any other way and we would be delighted to have your support and assistance.

St Helens Cider Pub of the Year The Turks Head

The Turks Head has won the St Helens Cider Pub of the Year Award.

Real cider is popping up more and more on the bars around St Helens. The best place to start may well be this year's cider pub of the year The Turks Head or last year's winner The Glasshouse. The Phoenix also currently has 3 local ciders on

offer with good reported sales. Elsewhere in the Town Centre The Olde England also sells real cider whilst in Prescott your best bet would be The Watch Maker.

St Helens Pub News

The Ship Inn in Rainhill is now offering a 20p discount per pint to card carrying CAMRA members. In Rainford The Junction (opposite the railway station on the line from Kirkby) has been sold and is undergoing a refurbishment. When it reopens (probably early May) it will have its own George Wright beer and a much greater focus on cask ales.

The Smithy Heritage Centre in Eccleston are planning to have a beer and brewing exhibition over the summer.

St Helens Diary

Committee/ Beer Festival-
Sportsmans Wednesday 23rd
May Start 8pm
Branch- Seven Stars Wednesday
13th May Start 8pm
Committee/ Beer Festival-
Wheatsheaf Mill Lane
Wednesday 27th June Start 8pm
Branch- Clock Face Prescott
Tuesday July 10th Start 8pm TBC

Tell Us What You Think

What's happening at your local?
What do you think about the St Helens Real Ale scene?
What do you want to see St Helens CAMRA do?
Let us know what you think. Contact us with your thoughts, views and suggestions at sthelenscamra@hotmail.co.uk

THE DISPENSARY

Liverpool CAMRA

Pub of the Year 2010 & 2011



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

A Warm Welcome to the Dispensary (CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Pub of the Year 2010 and 2011) from Pauline, Dave and all their staff



Up To **8 Beers**
and traditional cloudy cider

RENSHAW STREET, LIVERPOOL
(Formerly The Grapes) 0151 709 2160



Brewerynews

Peerless win Beer of Merseyside at the Liverpool Beer Festival 2012

'Storr' is a pale and hoppy cask pilsner. The name Storr' is derived from the old Norse word meaning great or strong.

Using specialist lager yeast and brewing vessels, Storr undergoes a slow fermentation process, followed by a month of cold conditioning to allow the clean, crisp flavours to develop.

Though Continental in style, Storr gains its fresh citrus hop finish and pleasant malt backbone solely from the use of UK-grown lager malt & Sovereign hedgerow hops. 4.8% ABV



Laboratory is now finished and equipped with analysis tools and microscope.

Liverpool and Calcutta were once inextricably linked as the two largest ports in the world.

Liverpool Craft Brewery

Introduce their latest craft beer American Red (5.0% A.B.V) It has a complex grain bill, and is packed full of American hops. Keep a look out for it.



Staff kitchen and canteen are now operational. This now gives LOB a theoretical weekly production capacity of 75 barrels = 300 nines = 2,700 gallons = 21,600 pints.

Brewery tours are expected to commence in June/July. See www.liverpoolorganicbrewery.com for details.

Liverpool brewery Cains has created a lower alcohol (2.8%) Calcutta Pale Ale exclusively for Tesco.

A total of 300 stores will now stock the distinctive two tone can, inspired by the intricate design of green, purple and gold saris.

Cains' joint managing director Sudarghara Dusanj explained: "The fortunes of

"There was huge trade between the cities so creating a Calcutta Pale Ale was a natural choice and the design of the can reflects the beautiful sari fabric which is part of Calcutta's colourful heritage."

Cains brewery has a long history of supporting responsible drinking initiatives. It was the first UK brewery to put a responsible drinking message on its products long before other brands opted to do the same.

Tesco buyer Chiara Nesbitt added: "Cains Calcutta Pale Ale is exactly what we were looking for. It has a fantastic brand presence on the shelf thanks to the beautiful design on the can, as well as offering Tesco customers a choice in terms of price and alcohol content".



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Famous Draught
Bass plus
**3 rotating
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centre and has been
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THE LORD WARDEN



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serving a
variety of
Local and
Regional Ales**



We are one of the least
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Liverpool. So come
inside and enjoy a good
pint in a friendly local
atmosphere

THE LORD WARDEN LONDON ROAD



LocAle Celebration 4th March 2012

Liverpool and Districts first
launched its LocAle scheme in
Stamps Too in Waterloo 3 years
ago, so it was fitting that we
should return here to celebrate
the scheme and introduce both
regulars and CAMRA members to
the delights of locally brewed
beer. LocAle is a national CAMRA
scheme aimed at promoting local
breweries thereby supporting
Local communities and also the
environment by reducing the
number of miles beer travels. The
Mayor of Sefton Cllr Paul
Cummins was on hand to launch
the celebrations a real ale
supporter and CAMRA member,
he began by making a short
speech praising the scheme and
the support it provides for both
local breweries and landlords
alike. Stamps Too Manager Frank
Parratt was also on hand to talk



about the benefits the scheme
has brought to the pub since it
became the first LocAle Pub in
Merseyside in 2009. Finally
CAMRA Chairman Geoff Edwards
spoke about the success of the
Liverpool and District LocAle
scheme which now covers some
36 pubs. Both Pub Regulars and
CAMRA members alike were then
invited to try some local beers
from a wide range which included
ales from **Liverpool Organic**
(which was born in this very pub),
**Southport, Brimstage and George
Wright**. I think most people who

attended the event would agree it
was a night of great beer in great
condition served in a friendly and
welcoming atmosphere – very
much a success! One final thank
you to Frank for letting us take
over his pub for the evening and
for providing a top notch buffet.

For more information on LocAle
please visit our LocAle webpage
www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk



LocAle Pubs around Merseyside

Augustus John	City Centre	Lion Tavern	City Centre
Baltic	City Centre	Lord Warden	City Centre
Belvedere	City Centre	Navigator	Old Swan
Blackburne Arms	City Centre	Philharmonic Hall (NOT the Pub)	City Centre
Cains Brewery Tap	City Centre	Picturedrome	Kensington
Caledonia	City Centre	Raven	Walton Vale
Cat & Fiddle	Bootle	Richard John Blackler	City Centre
Childwall Fiveways	Queens Drive	Richmond	City Centre
Dispensary	City Centre	Roscoe Head	City Centre
Dr Duncans	City Centre	Stamps	Crosby
Edinburgh	Wavertree	Stamps Too	Waterloo
Fall Well	City Centre	The Grapes (Roscoe St)	City Centre
Font	City Centre	The Hub	City Centre
Frank Hornby	Maghull	The Merton	Bootle
Head of Steam	City Centre	The Old Bank	Waterloo
Kelly's Dispensary	Wavertree	Thomas Frost	Kirkdale
Lime Kiln	City Centre	Thomas Rigby	City Centre
		Vernon Arms	City Centre
		Ye Cracke	City Centre

Ye Cracke

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**Voted Best Community Pub 2004/5
Pub of Excellence 2002/3**

Above awards from Liverpool and districts CAMRA. Recommended in the Good Beer Guide





It is around three years since MerseyAle featured the Willow Bank on Smithdown Road. At that time it won a Liverpool CAMRA Community Pub award and with that in mind a revisit was overdue. Often when visiting a pub it is handy to know a little local history.

During the expansion of Liverpool in the nineteenth century families and workers moved from the overcrowded city centre as new housing districts were developed. Public houses that catered for the growing populations were built. The area at that time known as Toxteth Park became home to a large number of railway workers based at Edge Hill and Crown Street stations and there was a large Welsh population in the area that worked in the construction of terraced houses.

The original Willow Bank was a coaching inn that opened in the 1700s although the current building dates from around 1860. Its customers then are likely to have been from amongst the railway workers.

The Willow Bank today still attracts customers from diverse origins; all enjoying an impressive choice of real ales. Usually seven real-ales are available at weekends and perhaps four midweek, regular beers are served from such as **Bays, Mordue, Anglo-Dutch, Harvestoun and Skinners**, and are always in fine condition.

In CAMRA terms the Willow Bank has become one of its most important non-city centre pubs



The Willow Bank 1920's

for the selection of real-ales it offers to a wide breadth of customers, including young drinkers who need a choice away from lagers. The pub, once famous for its wood panelling and crimson carpets has undergone many refittings. The carpets and much of the panelling went in the early 1990s and the 2011 refit has further altered the lounge, however in terms of beer choice the WB is always worth a visit and offers 10% off real-ales on Tuesdays.

Steve Berks



The Belvedere

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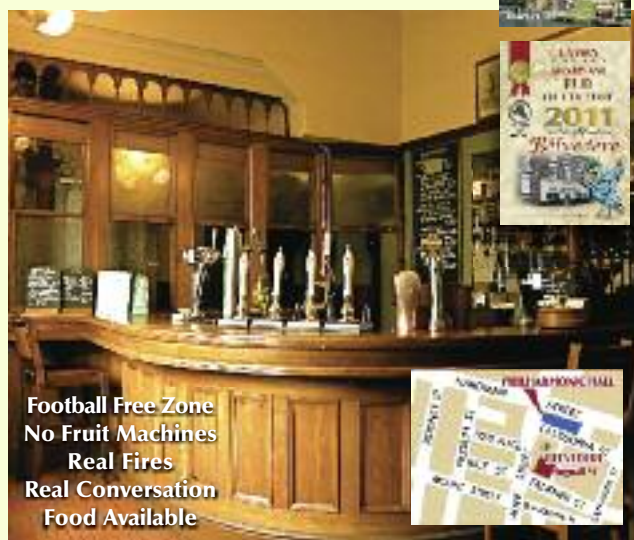
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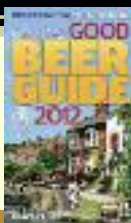
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**THE BRIDGE END
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TO WIN**

CAMRA'S NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR!

Revived village local, Bridge End Inn, Ruabon, scoops CAMRA national title

Pubs from Bedfordshire, Cornwall
and Lancashire make up other
finalists

**WINNER: Bridge End Inn, 5 Bridge
Street, Ruabon, Wrexham**

A small community pub in north
Wales transformed by a local family
has been announced as the best pub
in Britain by CAMRA, the Campaign
for Real Ale.

The Bridge End Inn, Ruabon, not only
enters CAMRA's history books as the
first ever Welsh pub to win its
National Pub of the Year competition,
but having only been re-opened by its
current owners in March 2009,
becomes one of the most remarkable
success stories in the competition's
history.

CAMRA's National Pub of the Year
competition recognises all the criteria
that make a great pub, including
atmosphere, decor, welcome, service,
value for money, customer mix, but
most importantly, the quality of
the beer.

The Bridge End Inn was taken over
and subsequently revitalised by the
McGivern family in 2009, with the
pub earmarked as the ideal premises
for the family microbrewery –
McGivern Ales - overseen by son
Matthew. Having reopened the pub 5
weeks after taking it on, the
McGivern family were praised by
CAMRA members for restoring the

pub's interior, and for introducing an
extensive real ale and cider range.

Now serving 7 real ales and a
selection of local ciders at any one
time, the pub has stocked real ales
from over 100 breweries since
opening, with a particular emphasis
on local produce. As well as acting as
the brewery tap for McGivern Ales,
other breweries from north Wales,
Cheshire and Shropshire feature
prominently at the bar.

Peter McGivern, Bridge End Inn
licensee, said:

*'We are a family business, and the pub
has been a real labour of love. What we
strived to do was create a pub not
focused on food that we would enjoy
visiting, putting the product first and
offering a wide range of traditional beer
styles. As a result we've built up a mixed
trade of locals and beer lovers from all
over Britain.'*

*'We are delighted with this national
award, particularly as we were told
when first taking on the pub that there
was little demand for real ale in the area.
Through a lot of passion and hard work
for what we do, we've enjoyed great
success in a short space of time, which
couldn't have been achieved without the
support of family, close friends, staff and
customers.'*

Hailing the success of the pub, Julian
Hough, CAMRA Pubs Director, said:
'The pub is an unbelievable success
story, and is a perfect case study of a
local outlet playing a pivotal role at
the heart of a small community. By
investing time into providing a

quality beer range full of choice, the
pub in a short space of time has
become revered across Britain by
many beer lovers. I offer my personal
congratulations to the Bridge End Inn
for such rapid progression in taking
CAMRA's national pub title.'

The Bridge End Inn beat 3 other
finalists this year to claim the crown.

These pubs are-

Engineers Arms, 68 High
Street, Henlow, Bedfordshire.
www.engineersarms.co.uk

Front, Custom House Quay,
Falmouth, Cornwall.

Swan with Two Necks, Main
Street, Pendleton,
Lancashire.
[www.swanwith
twonecks.co.uk](http://www.swanwith
twonecks.co.uk)

CAMRA's National Pub of
the Year competition is
judged by CAMRA's 139,074
members. Each CAMRA
branch selects their favourite
pub. The branch winners are
entered into 16 regional
competitions, with the 16
winners then battling it out
to reach the final stages of
the competition.



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NEW SHOP OPENED ON GRANGE RD WEST KIRKBY (See page 7)

Won the CAMRA
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CAMRA Backs E-Petition to End Escalator

CAMRA has responded to the 5% increase in beer duty in March's Budget by launching a concerted effort to secure over 100,000 signatures on the Beer Tax E-Petition. This petition was launched a few weeks ago by Marston's Brewery with the aim of influencing the Budget in 2013. 100,000 signatures will secure a high profile Parliamentary debate with accompanying press coverage which will help pressure the Government to end its policy of increasing beer duty by inflation plus 2% every year.

Duty on beer since 2008 has increased by a dramatic 42% due to a succession of inflation busting tax hikes.

These increases are having a harmful impact on pubs, jobs and pub goers' pockets and we need to show the Government the strength of feeling on this issue from voters.

A poll by the Sunday Mirror newspaper showed that 54% of voters wanted a freeze in tax on beer.

Over the last few months CAMRA has been busy lobbying to get the Chancellor to drop the escalator. This has involved countless meetings, submissions and briefings as well as over 5,500 people contacting their MPs backing CAMRA's campaign. The Chancellor has refused to listen to an overwhelmingly compelling case put by CAMRA and many others on the urgent need to drop the escalator.

Over the last year over 30,000 beer and pub jobs have been lost as over 750 pubs have closed.

Now that Budget 2012 has happened we can focus on pushing the Beer Tax E-Petition which is aimed at influencing Budgets from 2013 and beyond. The timing of this

petition was such that there was no prospect of it impacting on this year's Budget but it does have every chance of delivering a long awaited success next year. A sustained campaign over several months will get us over the 100,000 signature hurdle. Once we are over this hurdle we can expect a high profile Parliamentary debate within the following month.

CAMRA's support for this petition is echoed by the British Beer and Pub Association, Society for Independent Brewers and a whole range of other groups and companies. Our hope is that this alliance of interests will over the next twelve months persuade the Chancellor to ditch the beer duty escalator to save jobs, save pubs and ensure pub going remains an affordable activity.

CAMRA has produced campaign material for use in pubs and at beer festivals to encourage as many people as possible to sign the petition. If you would like to order beer mats or posters please email my colleague: claire.cain@camra.org.uk.

If you haven't done so already please sign the petition yourself at www.camra.org.uk and please ask everyone else you know that cares about beer and pubs to do the same.

Jonathan Mail



Latest E-Petition
update-
over 44,000
signatures

THE GRAPES

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CAMRA releases new national pub closure research



The British Pub Under Threat as Never Before New national pub closure research released by CAMRA shows-

Community pubs hit hard as over 300 permanently close between September 2011 – March 2012

12 pubs now close across Britain every week – 8 in suburban areas, and 4 in rural areas, with the nation's high streets showing resistance in the current economic climate

New county breakdown figures show Lancashire and West Midlands as among hardest hit areas.

CAMRA has released new national research showing that with over 300 community locals having permanently shut in just 6 months, crippling beer tax increases by the Government continue to threaten the future of traditional pubs. The news comes as over 44,000 consumers have signed a national e-petition in recent weeks to bring an end to above inflation beer tax increases. (page 21)

CAMRA's research shows 73% of regular pub goers support a freeze in beer duty.



National research commissioned by CAMRA has found that Britain's national pub closure rate now stands at 12 pubs per week. And away from Britain's city centre high streets – where a net loss of just 6 pubs in total has occurred across Britain in 6 months – rural pubs are closing at a net rate of 4 per week, and suburban at 8 per week.

With pubs hit by an inflation-busting 42% increase in beer duty since 2008, CAMRA is continuing to rally beer drinkers to sign an e-petition to call an end to above inflation increases in beer tax, thus giving struggling pubs a degree of respite in the current climate- www.camra.org.uk/saveyourpint. With over 44,000 consumers backing the petition, CAMRA is lobbying to secure 100,000 signatures and force a debate in Parliament on an issue causing great damage to communities across Britain. See page 21.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, said:

'Whether situated in a small village, city high street, or on the edge of a housing estate, pubs are so central to our society that whole communities can grow around a particular pub. A threat to the future of traditional

pubs is therefore also a threat to countless social groups within Britain that thrive because of their local.

'Unsustainable beer tax increases by the Government are ripping the heart out of community centres, but with over 33,000 consumers having recently signed the beer tax e-petition, beer drinkers and pub goers are actively voicing their discontent. CAMRA is now campaigning to secure 100,000 signatures, which would force Parliament to debate above inflation rises in beer duty.'

CAMRA has also today released new figures showing the worst hit areas of Britain for pub closures. Breaking down some of the largest counties across the country, targeted figures show how in 6 months (September 2011 – March 2012) an area such as Lancashire has lost 68 pubs, whilst the West Midlands has lost 37.

A full breakdown of the number of pubs lost in the last 6 months – county by county – can be viewed at www.camra.org.uk/countypubclosures

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for the facts drinkaware.co.uk

IPPR Report Finds Social Value of Community Pubs is up to £120,000 per year

**Pubs and places: The social value
of community pubs - IPPR
(2nd edition, 2012)**

This Report by the Institute of Public Policy research uses a 'social return on investment' methodology to measure the wider social value generated by a sample of community pubs, and finds that this ranges from around £20,000 to £120,000 per pub.

Crucially, pubs are more than just private businesses selling alcohol. Many pubs also play an important role at the heart of their local communities. Pubs provide meeting places, supporting formal and informal social networks, and a focal point for community events. They also play a key role in supporting local economies, and in providing residents and visitors with access to information and services.

Recommendations from the Report

To provide greater support to the majority of well-run community pubs, IPPR makes the following recommendations:

Business rate relief for 'centres of community': where pubs act as local community hubs they should be granted 50 per cent business rate relief. We have produced a method for measuring the social impact of a community pub which could be used to determine which pubs should qualify.

Eligibility for third sector finance: some pubs could apply to become community interest companies and apply for third sector grants and loans to develop the community-oriented side of their business.

Reform of planning law: to provide greater protection for community pubs. In particular the government should close the loophole in the law that allows pubs to be demolished without planning permission.

Buying pubs: greater support for existing tenants to buy their pub.

A minimum price for a unit of alcohol: to prevent irresponsible promotions and close the gap between the 'on' and the 'off' trades, a minimum price per unit of alcohol should be introduced.

The relationship between the large pub companies and their tenants: this relationship needs to be

rebalanced. Pub companies with more than 500 pubs offering commercial FRI leases over a period of time to provide flexibility to lessees including a guest beer option and an option to become free of 'tie' accompanied by an open market rent review. There should be a single stronger and more comprehensive code of practice supported by an independently constituted adjudicator with the ability to provide redress to lessees where the code is breached.

Diversification: pubs themselves need to diversify what they offer and keep pace with consumer tastes and demand.

Training and development: the pub trade needs to develop a stronger culture of training and professional development.

There is no one magic bullet that will simultaneously solve the problems facing Britain's community pubs. However, taken as a whole, the package of measures recommended here should ensure that local pubs can continue to play a role in supporting community life for many generations to come.



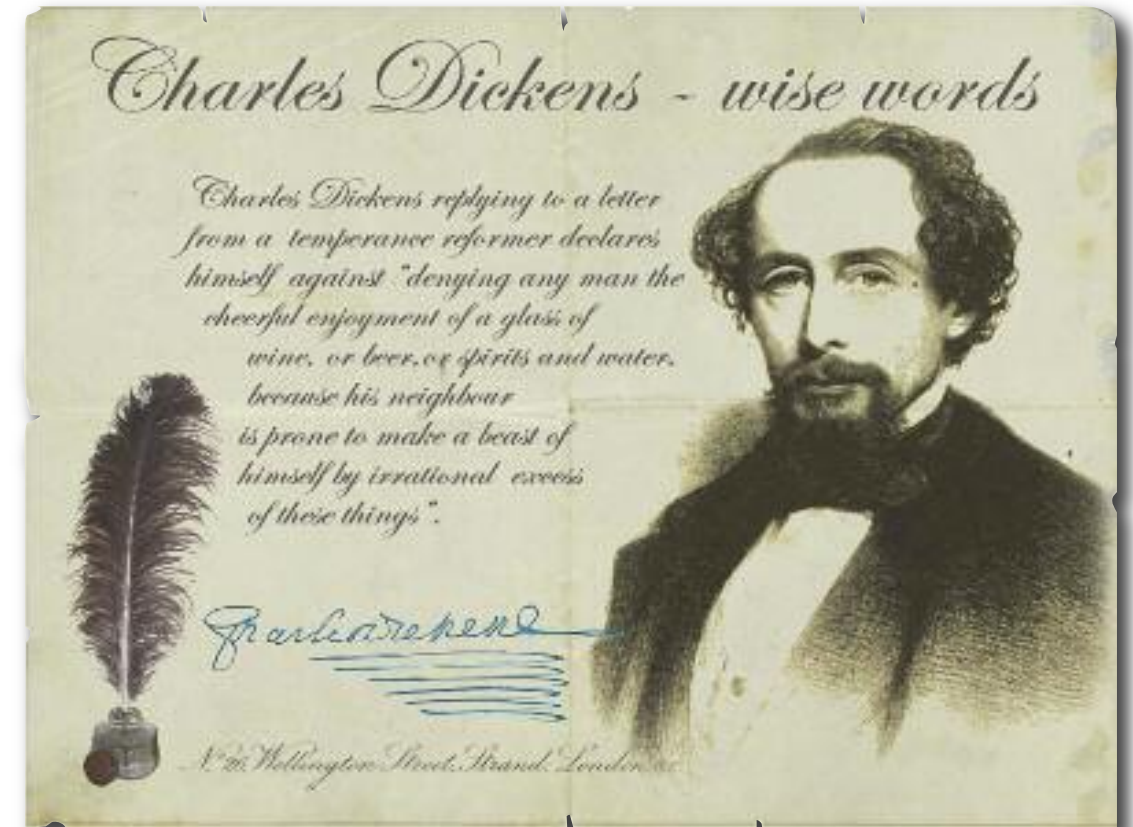
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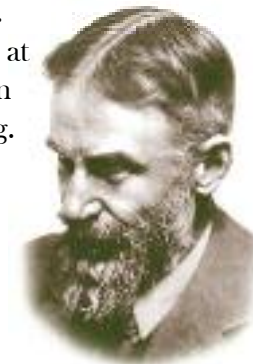


www.gbbf.org.uk GBBF GreatBritishBeerFestival

A selection of quotes from the past to counter the negative we so often see printed today



Alcohol is a very necessary article. It enables Parliament to do things at eleven at night that no sane person would do at eleven in the morning.
George Bernard Shaw



I would give all my fame for a pot of ale, and safety
William Shakespeare (Henry V)



Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy
Benjamin Franklin

www.famousdrinkingquotes.com

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MerseyAle Comment

MerseyAle has held back from commenting on the growing promotion of the concept of "Craft Beer", which conveniently has no agreed definition. However the CAMRA National AGM and Members Weekend at Torquay revealed the attempts being made by some people to persuade CAMRA to adopt "Craft Beer".

Some brewers and commentators are pushing the concept of "Craft Beer" and claiming that CAMRA is being left behind by this new definition of beer and failing to keep up with trends in the international brewing industry. Some British brewers such as Brew Dog, brewers of renowned real ales Punk IPA and Trashy Blond, are promoting their beer without distinction as to whether it is real ale or keg, the justification being that they are both quality distinctive "craft" beers. Indeed the new Brew Dog pub in Glasgow serves only "craft" keg versions of their beers and no real cask beer.

This takes us back to the bad old days of the 1970s when brewers sought to promote keg beer without distinction from cask conditioned beer, thereby leading to the formation of CAMRA to defend real ale.

Commentators such as Tim Webb the author of the excellent CAMRA Good Beer Guide to Belgium, and who you would expect to know better, claims that CAMRA are in a time warp and that methods of dispense are irrelevant so long as the beer is "craft brewed". One despairs!!

The whole point of CAMRA was to defend and promote Britain's brewing heritage which was beer which has been allowed a crucial secondary fermentation in the cask and served without the addition of additional gas. In short the definition of real ale.

The nearest the "craft brewing" people come to a definition of craft beer is that it is distinctive, brewed from quality ingredients by people committed to good beer.

As one delegate at the CAMRA AGM commented that definition would cover his efforts at home brewing which were distinctive, used quality ingredients but usually were undrinkable!! So we have no worthwhile definition of "Craft Beer". And where do we go from here? It comes down to whether we value and seek to promote the classic British brewing tradition which uses secondary fermentation in the cask to give natural condition and rejects the additional use of gas in the dispense. Thankfully the CAMRA National AGM voted down the motion to recognise "craft beer" but you can be assured that its supporters will be back next year. CAMRA's work is far from done.

Craft Beer – Keg Beer by Another Name?



Quotes from BEER CAMRA's magazine Summer 2011 feature - "Should CAMRA promote all "craft beers" ?

Peter Alexander and Tim Webb Debate the Issue

Peter Alexander says NO don't promote "craft beer"

Cask beer is the only growing sector in a declining beer market and a craft beer lobby urging us to change to include keg beer in our campaign ('craft' is a term favoured by the new wave of keg producers, though, confusingly, some cask breweries also use the term).

British craft-brewed beer, particularly in keg, is still rare outside certain specialist emporia. It is a very small niche

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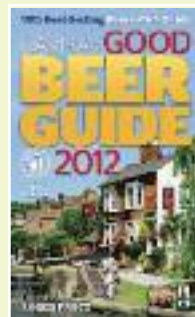
www.roscoehead.co.uk

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts PUB of the YEAR 2012

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

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Craft Beer – Keg Beer by Another Name? contd.

in the overall beer market, yet some urge us to support it in the same way we support real ale.

Its proponents believe we should overturn our very reason for existence and that we should concentrate on beer, not the method of dispense.

Few of us are so closed minded to believe that cask is the only way to serve good beer. CAMRA already recognises that certain non-real beer should be supported; we recognise different foreign brewing traditions and sell non-real, foreign beer at our festivals to promote diversity, awareness and choice. So, yes we should foster good relations with craft keg brewers and should never denigrate what they do just because they have chosen a different path from us. No keg bashing, please.

As Michael Hardman, one of our founders, said recently: "I must point out that we're not fighting against anything, we're fighting for something."

So, yes to a firm hand of friendship, but sorry, there should be no active promotion of craft beer from CAMRA. Our purpose until the members say otherwise is to promote real ale as the indigenous beer style of Britain. It is why we exist.

The craft movement must find its own way in the world.

Peter Alexander
Chairman of CAMRA's Rochdale, Oldham and Bury branch and a British Guild of Beer Writers member, Peter Alexander writes the www.tandlemanbeerblog.blogspot.com

Tim Webb says YES promote craft beer

What makes beer good or wine fine is dictated neither by a technical specification nor by advertising. It is defined by what experienced palates taste within it and can describe convincingly to others.

The new generation of beer drinkers gets this. It is not impressed by the technical correctness of production methods, but it does get excited by exploring taste and variety. CAMRA, meanwhile, is hidebound by a definition of good beer (agreed by my generation of its leaders) that was always dodgy, but is now plainly inadequate for the much-improved beer world that we made possible. We did not know as much then as we know now and we had no idea we would get this far.

The more prescriptive the tenets of any faith, the less use they are in helping its followers appreciate excellent developments.

CAMRA needs to get involved in the new world.

Tim Webb served on CAMRA's National Executive (1981-1987), ran GBBF in 1982 and 1983 and co-founded CAMRA Books. He went on to pen six editions of Good Beer Guide Belgium and now runs Cogan & Mater. He writes for BeerAdvocate magazine in the US and is currently compiling the World Atlas of Beer.



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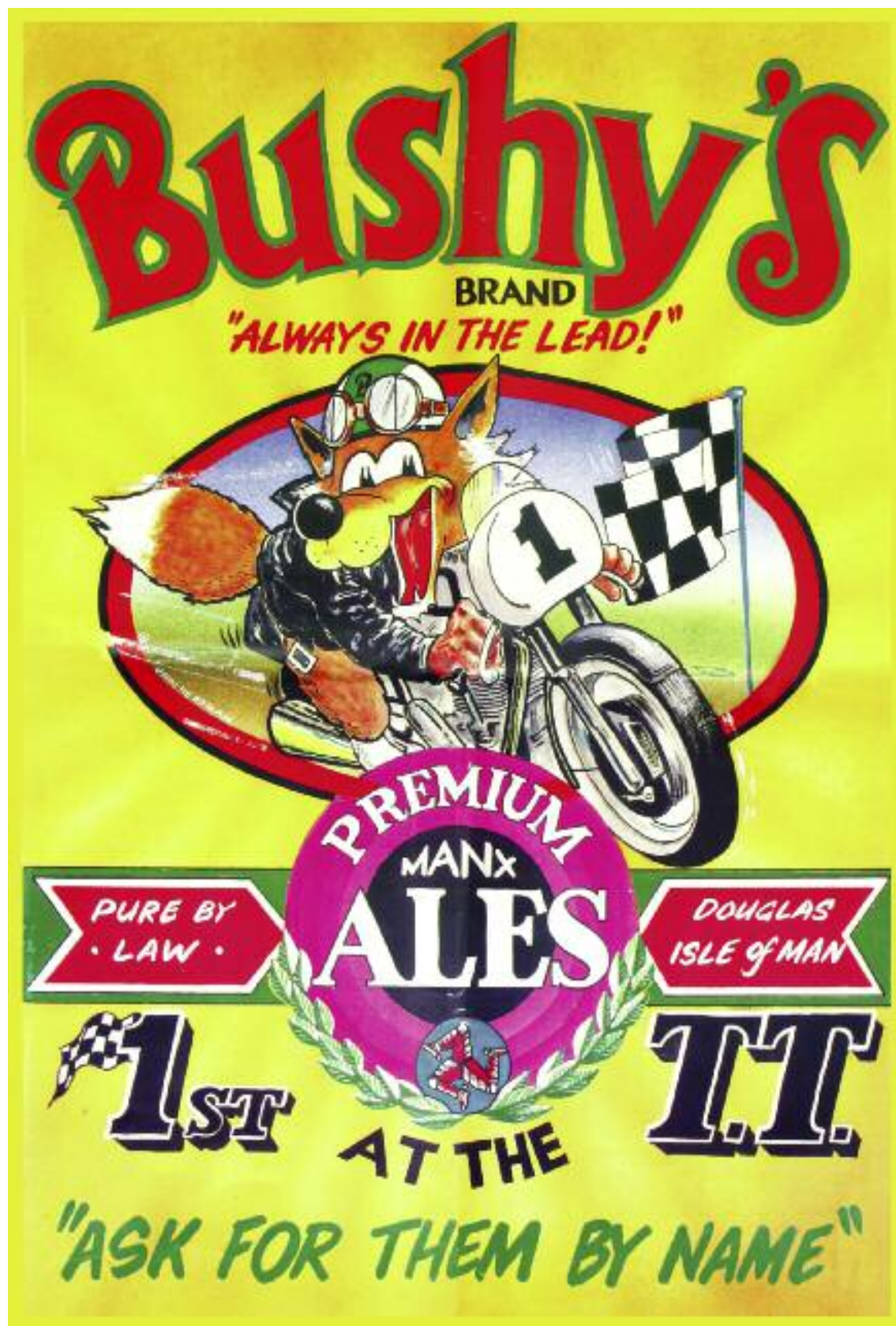



Frank Hornby Maghull

The Frank Hornby (formerly the Everest) in Maghull is on Eastway about a ten minute walk from the Merseyrail railway station on the Northern line to Ormskirk. There are design references to Frank Hornby throughout the pub. The focal point is a specially commissioned sculpture made of Meccano and Hornby trains and stations are displayed behind glass on the walls. Part of the pub has an industrial theme and there is an eclectic variety of chairs and tables. The pub was called The Everest, but after a complete refit, the name was changed by Wetherspoon to Frank Hornby.

"The company's decision to call the pub The Frank Hornby is very interesting, as it shows that Wetherspoons recognises the importance of Maghull and investing in the town and the Frank Hornby link with Maghull," said Maghull's Labour MP, Bill Esterson.

Photographs by Michael Jackson



ManxAle



Massive Success for First Isle of Man CAMRA Beer Festival Huge Team Effort Ensures Festival Sells Out!!

Special report

The first CAMRA Isle of Man Beer Festival, held at The Masonic Hall, Douglas, mid April, was a massive success. Indeed such was the demand that the Festival sold out of beer and cider early on the Saturday evening.



Both of the Island's larger breweries introduced new beers at the event, which brought over a much larger contingent of tourists to the Island than had been expected. With local bands providing entertainment on both Friday and Saturday nights the beer ran out a couple of hours early on the last evening.

The winner of the beer of the festival competition was **Castle Rock Harvest Pale** at 3.8%. Brewed in Nottingham this beer has won many National awards. The winning strength of ale was no surprise, as the Manx drinkers have generally preferred the lower strength 'session beers' in contrast to the U.K. where beer strengths drifted upwards over recent years, but are now coming back down - though often due to taxation rates rather than changes in consumer tastes.

The local CAMRA group would like to thank all those for supporting this inaugural event, with particular thanks to the venue, as well as local landlord **Andy Harris** and the team of the **Woodbourne Hotel**, who extended the beer range and opening hours to facilitate people

The success was thanks to a fantastic collective effort from the many volunteers, local breweries, and the Queens representative on Island Lieutenant Governor Mr Adam Wood no less. In a superb display of cooperation for the common cause of local real ale (LocAle), all three Island brewers, Okells, Bushys and Old Laxey (Bosun), attended the event and took part in a question and answer session during the Thursday sessions.

attending the event nearby. A first event is never entirely predictable, and IOM CAMRA would like to thank those for their patience at peak periods, when there was



Lieutenant Governor Adam Wood enjoys reading MerseyAle and sampling the range of real ales at the Festival.

significant queuing and a one in one out system was required because the hall was at fire limit capacity. This matter will be addressed in the event of a future festival but the festival goers' tolerance was much appreciated.

For those who are not aware, all festival proceeds once costs are covered, go towards funding campaigns to promote real ale, and pubs as facilities and venues at the heart of the community. All staff give their time up free of charge and are unpaid.

TT Marshall's Special Ale by Bushy's

The Island's tourist industry is heavily dependent on the TT motorbike event, which is another event, like the beer festival, heavily dependent on volunteers. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the formal **TT Marshalls association Ltd** (1962-2012) a group who are integral to the TT festival, held in May/June. There has been a long association with Bushys and the Marshalls, and the brewer launched a Golden Ale at the festival to celebrate the fifty years achievement. The brew comes in at 4% ABV strength wise, using Goldings Hops. Bushys are donating ten pence for every pint sold to the TT Marshall's fund, and the Lieutenant Governor poured the first pint at the CAMRA Festival - before sampling a range of the beers on offer with the assistance of bar manager Rob Storey and event organiser Charles Miller.

Okell's Seasonal Steam

Okells were not to be outdone, launching a new seasonal ale, **Okells Premium Steam Beer**. At 5% ABV, and dark gold in colour, the brew is single hopped with Northern Brewer during the boil, and Aroma hopped in the Whirlpool with Northern Brewer and Citra. With a citrus aroma, and lemon, spice, and sherbert taste, the beer is full bodied.



The spicy taste, whilst distinct, is as one would expect, far more subtle than the Okells seasonal Eastern



Spice, which some readers may have previously sampled.

New Microbrewery in Jurby

A new microbrewery is being set up in Jurby in the north of the island. Called **Doghouse Brewery**, a six barrel plant is being installed, along with five fermenters. It is hoped to be up and running around June time. Few details are available at this stage; however the brewery can be contacted via the new e-mail address of doghousebrewery@manx.net. There has been no movement on island for many years now in brewery numbers, so this promises to be a significant development.

Sidings wins IOM Pub of the Year

For the first time in many years, the **Sidings pub** in Castletown has won the Isle of Man Pub of the Year award. A full report will appear next issue after the presentation, but for those not aware, there have been significant improvements to this already excellent real ale pub in the last year, and the award is certainly justified given all the hard work and thought that has gone in to the project, by new landlord Dave Sayle. Some initial sceptics who thought the pub was too good to be improved on have been proved wrong! Runners up include the Whitehouse (Peel) and the Bay (Port Erin).

A Double Albert Celebration!

Two pubs on Island are called the Albert, one on Douglas North Quay and one, now the last surviving pub in Port St Mary, in the far south West of the Island. Both by chance are free houses, and both have

clocked up twenty years in the Good Beer Guide, and received special presentation awards from Isle of Man CAMRA.

In Port St Mary, The Albert

has led the way, with continuity here being the key-since the nineteen thirties! No less than four landlords have successfully passed



the baton on over the years, with Peter Holt, Chick (David) Kneen, and current team Pat and Kay O'Meara, all being present on the night at the awards presentation, as pictured. Johnny Williams, son of the previous landlord was also present on the night. In a declining pub market, the continued high standards and investment into this immaculately presented free house are clear demonstrations of how it's done, and precisely why this pub has outlived the opposition.

The Albert, Douglas

In Douglas, Harry Joughin celebrates twenty years in the guide simultaneously at the other Albert



adjacent to the bus station and ferry terminal. Again, here the investment shows, with the recently immaculately done work to the exterior of the building, close by the main bus terminal and ferry. In a very recent development, the Joughin family has just taken over **The Mitre** in Ramsey, with Selena Joughin and Carl Joughin in the driving seat. On visiting only two

days into the tenure, MerseyAle found reassuringly that attention to the ale and beer lines was the first priority, and over the coming months further improvements will be made. Interestingly, The **Jough Ale**, an Okells house brew made specially for the Albert in Douglas, will also be available in The Mitre. This ale some will remember was available in the Albert for many years before ceasing, but has this year recently returned as a permanent feature. The Mitre is situated on the Ramsey quayside, and has an upstairs main bar (where the cask ale is!), with unrivalled views over the working harbour below. There is also a small Schooner bar (only open week-ends currently), and another downstairs bar.

Heron & Brearley (H&B) refurbishments continue at pace

The Bridge on The Quay (Douglas) has been modernised throughout internally. Whilst the superb tiled traditional facia and frontage is retained, inside a full refurbishment



has taken place. Modern home cooked food is the theme, in this three roomed pub. To the right is a permanent restaurant area. The intimate central room and bar is



retained, with more cask ale now on offer. The room is set for tables during the day, but cleared for drinkers on quieter evenings. The outside area and the room to the left with T.V. screens remain with an

attractive bar area, highlighted by the unusually stylish light fittings. The fresh modern look may well not appeal to the traditionalists, but with the Saddle pub nearby, a classic local, clearly H&B are attempting to cater for all tastes, and the much needed pub dining options along the quay will certainly appeal to those visiting the area.

The Ship, Castletown

The writer had begun to wonder if H&B was prepared to allow certain outlets to wither on the vine, with



underinvestment, but as MerseyAle goes to print, I am delighted to report two recent refurbishments.

At The Ship in Castletown, attention has been paid to the upstairs area, with fantastic



emphasis on providing a venue for live music. Classic posters of the likes of Hendrix and AC/DC adorn the walls.

The Central, Ramsey

In Ramsey, The Central, on the T.T. course at Parliament Square has also been refurbished. Both pubs are not yet finished, and a further report will follow. Both these outlets are traditional community locals, and The Central in particular, now under the management of Mandi Smith (formerly from the Britannia), looks like it's going to be an

absolute peach of a classic local. Modern with small rooms highly sympathetically refurbished, with its games, button back seating, planned fire area and new rear cosy alcove section. Three real ales are now available, Okells bitter, an Okells seasonal, and a guest ale.

The Island appears to be in the midst of a very shrewd refurbishment program from H&B. Not everything will appeal to all, but catering for differing types, and more importantly new types of clientele seems to be the order of the day, with clever usage of the H&B pub estate, town by town. If the pub is to survive as a venue in difficult times, then this type of approach has to be adopted.

Clarendon, Douglas



As a reminder of those difficult times, the Clarendon on Douglas quay has closed, and along with the Douglas Hotel closed some years ago, it is to be refurbished



into offices, with hopefully a single bar to replace the two outlets. The works will take at least eighteen months.

Meg Cowin New Inn, Laxey

Similarly, The New Inn, Laxey, has now closed. Opened the same week as the Great Laxey Wheel began to turn, the pub has been run by Meg Cowin for some fifteen years or so. She is to use it as a private house. Always up for

friendly banter, and like a favourite Aunt, never afraid to put the insolent punter in his/her place if



needs be, Meg will be sorely missed, not least because of the greatest accolade the understated real ale drinker can give-'she knew how to keep the beer'. Meg, we wish you well. Please note the pubs withdrawal from the 2012 Good Beer Guide due to the closure.

Okells online Cask Ale Updates

For those interested in hunting down ales with maximum ease, Okells and Heron & Brearley now have a comprehensive on Island service, at www.okells.co.uk for Okells products with direct information from head brewer Dr Mike Cowbourne, and manngo.im for the H&B pub estate under 'cask ale programme'. Having monitored these sites for some weeks, they are proving highly reliable and up to date.

A sign at the Haven! All's Well at Haven

The missing pub sign at the Haven



Port Erin has been replaced. Someone at H&B must read ManxAle !!! (see February edition on www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk)

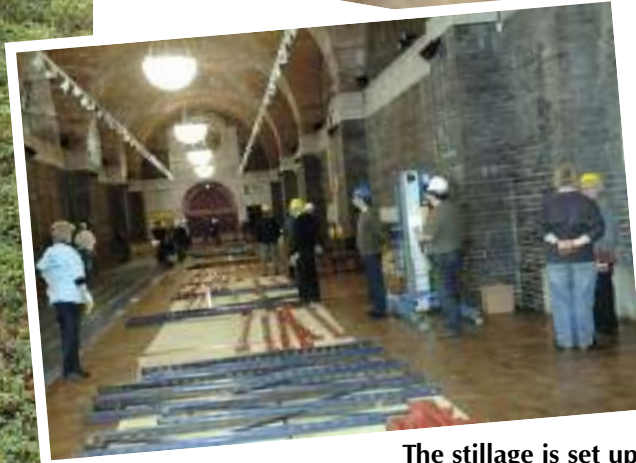
Dave Halliwell – MerseyAle IOM Correspondent

LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL 2012

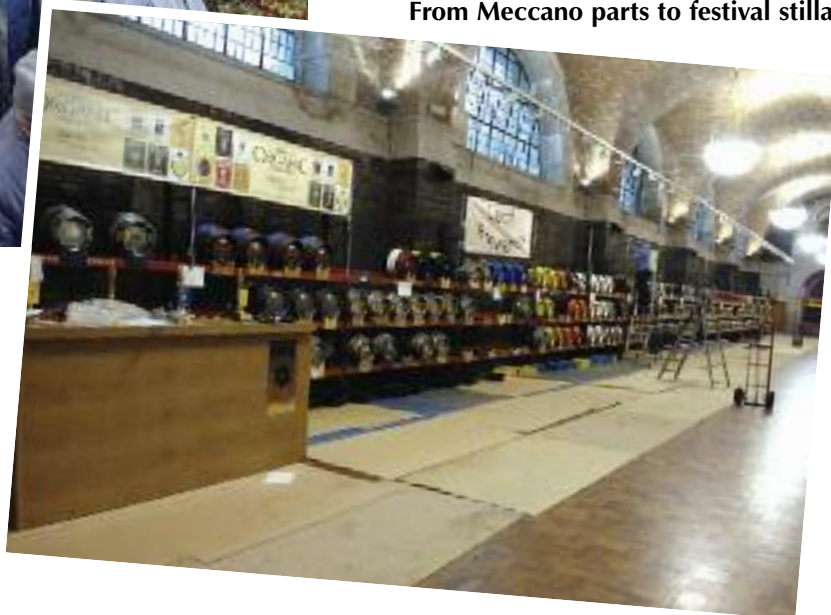
In the Beginning – The queue
December ticket sales day
Another festival sell out



The Crypt awaits



The stillage is set up.
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from Frank



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(RLPO)
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opening of the
Beer Festival



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part of the Liverpool CAMRA Snowball
Campaign.



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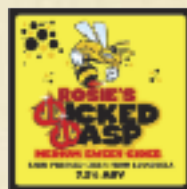


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In the bar, the darts are flying. Conversation
and lager's in full flow.

A plate of sandwiches hits the bull's eye,
And outside, the beer garden's all a
nicotine glow.

Red Stewart's in the lounge, singing a slow one,
Just as last orders are being called.
Then everyone's up on their feet dancing,
In the corner pub, that's struck the right chord.

Terry Clarke



LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL 2012



**Not available from
the CAMRA stand**

Left, our sponsor Mark Hensby
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Middle, Vasily Petrenko (Royal
Liverpool Philharmonic conductor)
and Steve Downing our festival
organiser



**Where's the
knobbly knees
contest?**



CHEERS See you next year!



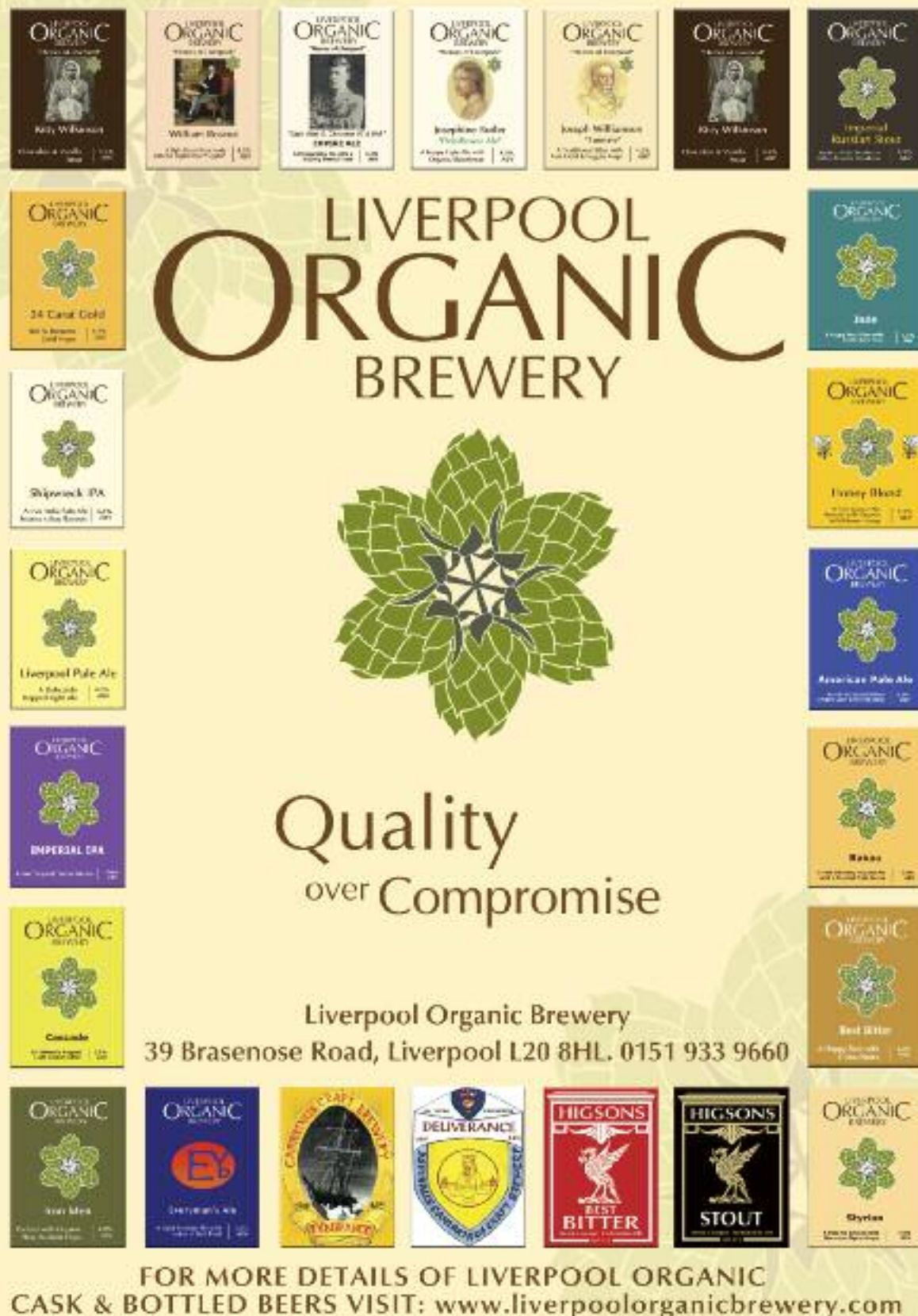
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CAMRA NATIONAL CIDER AND PERRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2012

Cornwall and Herefordshire producers take national titles

CAMRA has announced the overall winners of the National Cider and Perry Championships 2012. The competition is held annually at the Reading Beer and Cider Festival, Reading, Berkshire. The winner of the Cider Gold medal is **Cornish Orchards Farmhouse**, which the judges described



finish by a judging panel consisting of publicans, drinks writers and CAMRA members. On hearing the results of the Perry competition, Denis Gwatkin of Gwatkin Cider and Perry, said:

'This is wonderful news. It's 20 years since we won our first CAMRA award at Stockport Beer and Cider Festival, so it's good to know we are still doing things right.'



as 'a very light and easy drinking cider, well balanced, and packed with flavour'.

The winner of the Perry Gold medal is **Gwatkin Blakeney Red**, which the judges described as having 'a sweet aroma, with a wonderful elderflower and spirit taste, and a satisfying bite in the finish.' CAMRA's National Cider and Perry Championships 2012 in Reading featured ciders and perries from different regions of the UK, and assessed on factors such as aroma, flavour/taste, overall balance and

The Cider champion producer, Cornish Orchards, started large scale production in 1999, and is a well established producer, which has been growing cider apples for the past 20 years.

Andrea Briers, CAMRA National Cider and Perry committee chairman, praised the quality of this year's entrants. She said:

'The competition once again brought together real cider and perry producers from across the country, and showcased some excellent variety and choice. The quality of the products coming through is testament to the hard work of Britain's producers.'

The Awards

Cider

GOLD- Cornish Orchards, Farmhouse (Duloe, Cornwall)

SILVER- Perry Brothers, Sweet Vintage (Dowlish Wake, Somerset)

BRONZE- Burrow Hill, Medium (Martock, Somerset)

Perry

GOLD- Gwatkin, Blakeney Red (Abbey Dore, Herefordshire)

SILVER- Butford Organics, Medium (Bodenham, Herefordshire)

BRONZE- Minchew, Stinking Bishop (Aston-on-Carrant, Gloucestershire)

"The Punishment of Perfidious PubCos"

The Liverpool Real Ale Mumming Play

A New Twist in the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign

The 2012 Liverpool Beer Festival was the venue for the first performance of the new weapon in the Bringing New People to Real Ale Campaign, namely the Liverpool Real Ale Mumming play "The Punishment of Perfidious PubCos."

Performed on the stage in the Crypt Concert Room by the Green Blade

Mummers, the play portrayed the battle between licensees and the perfidious PubCos represented by Punch. The play's hero is LocAle who champions the cause of local real ales in PubCo pubs, supported by the Doctor, a Dr CAMRA, and the licensee. The villains are Punch and The Green King.

After much rhyming verse, music, song, jokes, silly hats and gratuitous violence, Punch sees the error of his ways and offers to provide LocAle at fair prices to his customers and reasonably priced rents and beer to his licensees (well, it is fantasy). Moreover the



Green King, that peddler of beers watered down in strength and named after breweries which he has closed, receives his come upppance to the acclaim of all. A fitting end for **"the Man the very fat Man who waters the Workers' Beer."**

The play is a complete rewriting by Liverpool CAMRA member Helen McCall of a mumming play performed by the Mersey Mummers back in 1976 at the CAMRA Beer Festival held at Mountford Hall at the University Guild and entitled **"the Slaying of Wicked Whitbread"**. That was when the Big Six

brewers were rampaging across the country buying up and closing real ale breweries and replacing their beers with keg beers.

Now in 2012 the target has switched from the big brewers to the PubCos whose financial demands are driving many British pubs to closure and threatening the survival of that British national institution, the Pub. Hence the new play. The words of the songs have been rewritten to focus on the PubCos and the big brewers, including

"I likes a drop of good beer I do" and "I waters the workers' beer".

MerseyAle and the CAMRA Liverpool Pubs Passport make appearances as the antidote to Punch and The Green King.

The play will be performed in pubs and at special events to highlight CAMRA's campaign against the excesses of the PubCos and to highlight the need for urgent Government action, something which the Coalition Government has refused to do despite overwhelming evidence from the Parliamentary Select Committee. The play brings these arguments about PubCos to a wide audience in a popular way that brings laughter and enjoyment at the expense of both PubCos and Government. Very much in the historic tradition of mumming.

The full text of the play can be read on www.liverpoolcamra.co.uk



What is Mumming and What is Green Blade?

Mumming plays are usually performed at Christmas and at Easter. Both the Christmas Mumming Play and the Easter Pace-Egging Play are rooted in the folk tradition and involve the character of King George, who 'kills' his adversary in a sword fight after an exchange of taunts. The latter is then revived by a comic doctor with a rather unusual series of remedies. Both plays involve songs - including Wassail songs at Christmas - and a range of other characters such as Beelzebub, a Noble Captain, and Little Johnny Jack. Heckling by the audience is encouraged. Traditionally, folk plays were performed by men, but this is no longer the case.

Green Blade is a Wirral based group who perform



"I Likes a Drop of Good Beer"
The pub's a place I show my face
To meet friends from far and near,
But they're closing down all over town,
So where will we go for beer?
For I likes a drop of good beer I do
I likes a drop of good beer



traditional and contemporary folk songs and mumming plays both indoors and outdoors, in libraries and at community, peace and green events.

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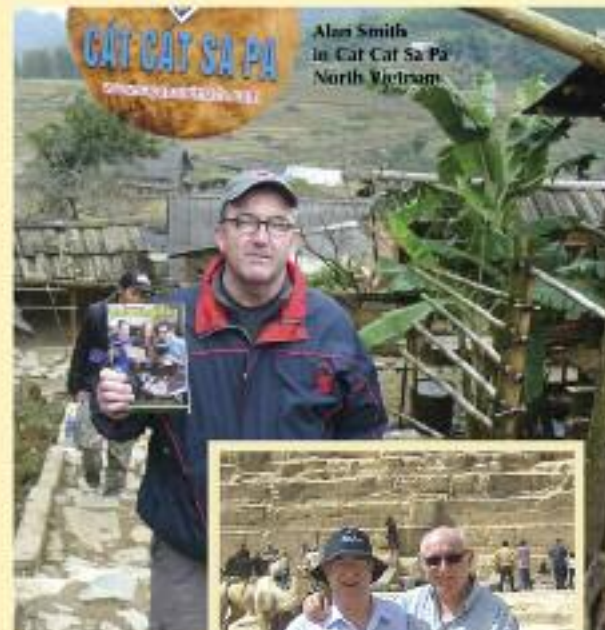
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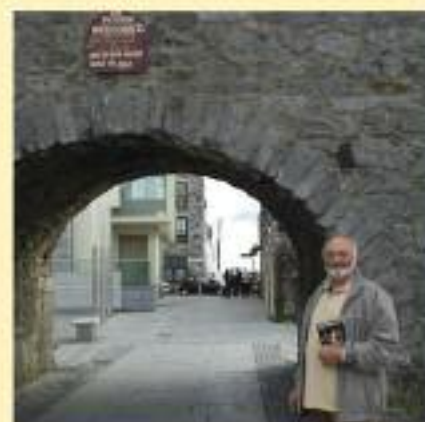


Marathon MerseyAle sets a time of 3hrs 50mins at the
London Marathon - courtesy of Jackie Chen of
Woolton, who ran to raise money for Diabetes UK.

Merseyside
CAMRA members
Dave Jones and Carl
Latham by the
Pyramids in Cairo.
Looks like they're
having a
Pharaoh time!



Willowbank regular John Warren, Runway Bay,
Jamaica. Penguins on a Jamaican beach!



Mike
Gilligan at
the Spanish
Arch,
Galway,
Ireland.
The
magazine is
wonderful.
Keep up the
good work

Owzat for a
good read?

Lancashires
first day of
the cricket
season at
Old Trafford



With apologies to all above. The delay in publishing ambassadors
photos in MerseyAle the was due to lack of space.
To have your pictures included in the Ambassadors page, please send
photos of yourself with a MerseyAle in an unusual place (not
necessarily abroad).

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Celebrate a World Classic Beer – MILD

Britain is home to a World Classic Beer – MILD – and the month of May is the CAMRA Mild Month Campaign to encourage people to try this great tasting beer. A number of city centre pubs will be featuring a Mild, giving you the chance to try a wide range of Milds.

Mild is often under rated and misunderstood. It is a classic British beer style which dates back to the 19th century. Prior to the First World War there were many Milds that were strong in alcoholic strength, with 6 to 8% strength being common. War time shortages and later duty changes saw the strength of many Milds drop substantially to the 3 to 4% that is typical today. Stronger Milds have seen a revival, with Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby at 6% being perhaps the best known.

Liverpool was a place where Mild was popular, with local brewer such as Higsons, Walkers, Bents and Threlfalls producing Milds. In



the 90s Cains introduced a cask Mild which attracted a dedicated following, but this is now only available in cans apart from as a once a year seasonal cask ale. In recent years Wapping Brewery, Liverpool One and George Wright have all introduced Milds and the beer style is making a comeback nationwide with a marked increase in the number of Milds now brewed. Latest local addition is a Higsons Mild now brewed by Liverpool Organic.

Compared with Bitter, Mild uses fewer hops and accentuates the flavours from the malt, resulting in some entrancing coffee, chocolate and rich malt notes. It is often dark in colour but light Milds also are common, with the beers such as Timothy Taylors Golden Best and Banks Original Mild.

LION FREE AT LAST



The Lion Tavern Moorfields has signed a new deal with Punch Taverns which, in return for an increase in rent, allows it to have four of its eight handpumps **free of tie** selling beers selected by licensees Sean and Mike. So look out for a wider range of real ales including

micro breweries at this classic Grade II listed CAMRA Pub of Excellence.

The breakthrough is being celebrated with a Seven Day Lion Beer Festival Thursday 31st May to Thursday 7th June. On Sunday 3rd June real ales and ciders will be reduced to £2.95 a pint.

SHIP & MITRE

Beer Festivals

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American
July 4th - 8th



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[The brewers, Jan 2011]

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The Turks Head

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2009



A Traditional
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Atmosphere,
Real Fire
and an Ever
Changing range of
Real Ale



A CAMRA REGIONAL
PUB OF THE
YEAR

A Runner-up for the
CAMRA
NATIONAL PUB OF THE
YEAR

12 handpumps
Serving Traditional Ales
Ciders and Perry

- 5 draught continental beers ■ Wide selection of bottled continental beers
 - Tuesday - Quiz night 9-30 pm
 - Thursday - Curry and Jazz Night
 - Cask Marque ■ Good Beer Guide 2011
- Open Mon - Fri 2-11 Sat, Sun 12-11



Cooper St. St Helens Tel 01744 751289

A Campaign of Two Halves

Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____

Forename(s) _____

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Email address _____

Tel No(s) _____

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____

Forename(s) _____

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

Direct Debit Non DD

Single Membership £20 ☐ £22 ☐
(UK & EU)

Joint Membership £25 ☐ £27 ☐
(Partner at the same address)

For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

12/10

**Campaigning for Pub Goers
& Beer Drinkers**

**Enjoying Real Ale
& Pubs**

Join CAMRA today - www.camra.org.uk/joinus



Instruction to your Bank or
Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder

Branch Sort Code

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Reference

9 2 6 1 2 9

FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign for Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account identified in the instruction above to the appropriate account by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may result in my Bank or Building Society debiting my account if it is not paid successfully to my Bank or Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- 1. This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept direct debits to pay by Direct Debit.
- 2. If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- 3. If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- 4. If you make a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
- 5. You can cancel your Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be requested. Please do not rely on

Banks and Building Societies may use direct debit instructions for some types of accounts

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

9th June Mid-Wales Llanidloes *

7th July Bishops Castle Town Beer Festival

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 are:

Tuesday 29th May Free coach to survey pubs in Lydiate, Melling and Sefton. Depart from 7pm at Ship and Mitre and picking up at 7.20pm in Crosby (Sainsbury's Car Park Opposite St Helen's Church). **Places must be booked in**

advance please email requests for places to surveys@mersycamra.org.uk

Tuesday 26th June Survey of pubs in Crosby. Meet at Yates's (formally the George) at 7pm. We will be visiting Stamps, the Crow's Nest, Marine FC and the Edinburgh.

Tuesday 31st July Survey of pubs in West Derby (Details to be confirmed at a later date check website and facebook for details).

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)

MerseyAle Credits

Editor

John Armstrong
merseyale@merseycamra.org.uk

Layout Design

Dennis W Jones

Photographs

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

Contributors

Dave Halliwell
Steve Berks
Tony Williams
Jean Pownceby
Terry Clarke

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Printfine, Liverpool
0151 242 0000
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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
0871 200 22 33
www.merseytravel.gov.uk

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

A combination of Branch Social evening and News Update on Branch and National Activities.

Wednesday 20th June at Gardeners Arms Vale Road Woolton
Free bus from outside the Ship & Mitre at 7.15pm to the Gardeners Arms, Woolton. Get Together starts there at 8pm.
To reserve seat email social@merseycamra.org.uk or phone Ian on 07521 741 586. The bus will be back in Liverpool by 11pm.

Wednesday 18th July TBC
Wednesday 15th August – Pub ramble – Childwall - Woolton.
Details TBC



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



www.facebook.com/CAMRALiverpool



Liverpool CAMRA



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