

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool & Districts Magazine

Winter 2014

FREE



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

email merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



print run 11,000

THE LION TAVERN

www.liontavern.com

67 Moorfields Liverpool L2 2BP Telephone 0151 236 1734

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 food menu.



8 HANDPUMPS

supply a varied selection of prize winning Real Ales (including at least one locally brewed ale) plus hand pulled Cider

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Served with salad & toast

SAMOSAS MEAT OR VEGETABLE

Served with mango chutney & Tzaki

WEEKLY LOCALE
See Board for future Real Ales

CAMRA DISCOUNT
Card carrying CAMRA members 10 pence off pint of real ale



FOOD
See the board for selection of good value food

QUIZ NIGHT
every Tuesday at 9.30pm

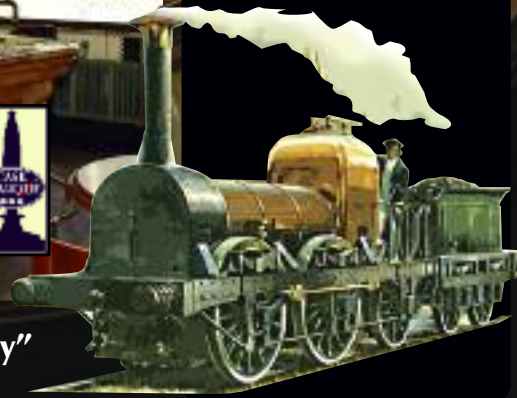
ACOUSTIC NIGHT
Second Thursday of the Month 8pm

BOB DYLAN SOCIETY
Meets first Thursday of the Month 8.30pm

MEET THE BREWER
Third Thursday of the Month 8pm

POETRY GET TOGETHER
Fourth Thursday of the Month 8pm

V6 Adventure Club
Meet every Wednesday at 8.00pm



"One of the Hundred Best Pubs in the country"

Daily Telegraph

PUB OF EXCELLENCE CASK MARQUE CAMRA NATIONAL INVENTORY PUB

MerseyAle

CAMRA Liverpool and Districts Branch

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John Armstrong

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QR Codes page 55



Isle of Man CAMRA Branch

www.isleofmancamra.org.uk

CAMRA national site

www.camra.org.uk

Cover by Dennis Jones

Homage to Pink Floyd's **Dark Side of the Moon** album to mark the shedding of light on the Dark Side of the PubCos. The Floyd have just released their first album for 20 years, the **Endless River**, no doubt to mark the seemingly endless ten year campaign to curb the PubCos.

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

Welcome to MerseyAle and ManxAle

Shedding Light on the Dark Side of the PubCos

Our cover marks the landmark Parliamentary victory to amend the PubCo Bill to shed light on the Dark Side of the PubCos. For ten years, yes ten years, an alliance of organisations including CAMRA, politicians, licensees and individuals has been battling through a succession of obstacles erected by the Pub Industry and the Government to bring about a major change in the way PubCos treat their licensees and by extension you their customers. After ten years of campaigning Parliament has voted to introduce a right for licensees to buy beer free of tie on the open market and to market - only rents. This should mean a fairer deal for both licensees and customers. Read the feature on pages 4 and 5.

There is more Good News for real ale on page 7 with some very heartening figures for the growth in real ale sales, especially amongst young people, and also in the number of breweries in Britain - a new record. Read 'Let the Feet Take the Strain', the latest event in the Liverpool CAMRA Snowball Campaign to Bring New People, especially women, to Real Ale, on pages 30-31. We shed yet more light through the windows of the Dispensary, showing how vandalism to etched glass can be repaired using modern reproduction techniques. See centre pages 28-29.

The Pub and the People's Culture

CAMRA makes much of the importance of the pub to community life and on pages 12-15 we highlight

the historic role the pub has played in supporting the People's Culture of Sheffield Carols in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Without the pub this tradition might have died out years ago, and it is in the local pubs that you can join in the singing.

MerseyAle is International with ManxAle

The ManxAle section, pages 32-41, brings you news from Isle of Man CAMRA in every MerseyAle edition. Here too there is good news regards real ale in the Island's pubs, plus campaigning at the Isle of Man Food and Drink Festival. Make a note of the CAMRA Isle of Man Beer Festival 9th to 11th April 2015, which this year is in the prestigious Villa Marina Douglas.

The Importance of the Pub and of Joining CAMRA

The pub is a vital part of British community and cultural life and the success in curbing the powers of the PubCos bodes well for the future of the British Pub. Yet these successes only come from commitment to campaigning, and it is here that CAMRA plays a crucial role in mobilising people and organisations to fight for the future of the pub. With pubs continuing to close at a rate of 30 a week there is much yet to do. So turn to page 41 and make an early new year's resolution to Join CAMRA Today.



John Armstrong
Editor

MPs Shine Light on Dark Side of the PubCos - Victory After Ten Year Battle



Government Defeated 284 to 259 in Commons Vote PubCo Bill amended to include right to free of tie beer and market only rents



The amazing victory in the House of Commons saw a combination of Labour MPs and Coalition MP rebels inflict the first Government defeat on one of its own bills since the General Election of 2010. An amendment brought by long time pub campaigner Lib Dem



Greg Mulholland MP for Leeds North West, saw Government opposition overturned to win the vote and to win PubCo licensees ;

- The right to buy beer Free of Tie on the open market
- The right to Market Only rents

The Government failure to include these rights in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill led to the amendment and the revolt by MPs. After the vote Secretary of State, Vince Cable, indicated he would not use Government powers to overturn the amendment. The result should be fairer rents and cheaper beer prices in over 13,000 PubCo pubs, (the legislation applies to the pubs of the larger PubCos). The amendment gives the automatic right for pub landlords to exchange their tenancy for an independently-assessed market rent without any "tie". Mr Mulholland, who is also the

chairman of the all-party Parliamentary Save the Pub group, told MPs the new clause, which was backed by Labour, had been drafted by lawyers and publicans and would come in gradually, reducing the impact on the industry. He added: "This is a reasonable gradual process that will simply bring back market forces into a sector that frankly has become grotesquely anti-competitive."

Response From the Campaigners

The various campaign groups including CAMRA collaborated to organise a public petition at short notice to support the amendment. This attracted a remarkable 8,000 signatures in just a few days, demonstrating the strength of public support for PubCo reform which had teeth and gives the licensees real benefits for their pubs, customers and business.

Tim Page, CAMRA Chief Executive said:

"Today's landmark Parliamentary vote helps secure the future of pubs. CAMRA is delighted that, after ten years of our campaigning, MPs have today voted to introduce a market rent only option for licensees tied to the large pub companies - a move that will secure the future of the Great British Pub. The large pub companies will no longer be able to charge their tenants prices up to 60 pence a pint higher than open market prices. This simple choice should spell the end of PubCo licensees being forced out of business through high rents and tied product prices."



Bill Esterston MP for Crosby wrote to Liverpool CAMRA;

I will be 'voting for pubs' therefore backing the amendment to end abusive business practices designed to take advantage of individual licensees. Today's vote will give us the chance to get a fairer deal for pubs and for pub landlords, which is long overdue. Pubs are vital hubs for communities in Sefton Central and are valued strongly by local people. The work that pub landlords do is crucial in keeping these services operating in our communities. But far too many pub chain landlords are not getting a fair deal for the work they do. They are tied into contracts which are disproportionately unfair.

The Federation of Small Businesses said ;

It is an historic day for tied publicans and will lead to a more open and competitive marketplace.

Pub Industry Predictably Cries Wolf

The industry body the **British Beer & Pub Association**, whose members own around 20,000 of the nation's pubs, said the changes could do more damage to the already troubled industry.



"This change effectively breaks the 'beer tie', which has served Britain's unique pub industry well for nearly 400 years. It would hugely damage investment, jobs, and results in 1,400 more pubs closing, with 7,000 job losses," BBPA's chief executive **Brigid Simmonds** said in a statement.

Simon Townsend, chief executive of Enterprise Inns, said that the amendment would lead to widespread pub closures and job losses. "This amendment is a disproportionate response which proposes fundamental change that is wholly contrary to the findings of the consultation, from which the Bill was drawn up," he said. "We continue to believe the tie offers the best operating model for the vast majority of our publicans."

Many financial commentators said it was anyone's guess as to what the longer term effect would be on the pub industry and that there were a number of ways that the PubCos and individual licensees could respond to the change. It was premature to claim there would be large scale pub closures.

PubCo Shares Slide 17%

Shares in PubCos fell sharply by up to 17% in the days after the vote. Initial trading saw Enterprise Inns' shares fall immediately by 12.6%, Punch Taverns lost 8.5% and Mitchells & Butlers shed 2.5%.

Greg Mulholland Hits Back at the PubCos Lobby

Mr Mulholland accused the trade body of "scaremongering". "The big brewers and PubCo association... have been lobbying vociferously with a whole stream of utterly baseless comments," he said in his speech to the House of Commons. "Contrary to typically misleading and increasingly desperate statements from the PubCos and their lobbyists, this does not abolish the beer tie. It simply gives tenants the right, at rent review or renewal, to request an independent assessment of their rent and opt to pay that if their PubCo fails to offer

"For too long, the large indebted PubCos have exploited their tenants and taken more than is fair or sustainable from pub profits, now the House of Commons has clearly passed the select committee option of a market rent option which will stop the PubCo rip-off of hugely marked up beer prices and excessive rents.

"This is great news for pubs, hardworking PubCo publicans and for communities and consumers, who will see many more sustainable pub businesses and a cheaper pint of beer, free from the PubCo price escalator".

Ten Years of Campaigning for PubCo Change

A remarkable alliance of organisations and politicians has battled away for ten years to bring about major change in the PubCos and their power over their licensees. In addition to CAMRA, the Fair Deal for the Pub campaign, the All Party Parliamentary Save the Pub Group, and individual licensees such as Liverpool's **Carol Ross**



licensee of the **Roscoe Head**, winner of the **Merseyside CAMRA Roger Kirby Award** for her campaigning on licensees' rights, have all contributed to the successful outcome. Tireless work by Greg Mulholland as MP and Chairman of the Save the Pub Group has been vital in steering change through the twists and turns of the endless Parliamentary process. The campaigners have had to overcome repeated setbacks and knockbacks by the Government, who refused to bring in legislation despite repeated Parliamentary reports finding that the policies and actions of the PubCos were unacceptable.

What They Said

"Allowing over 13,000 pub tenants tied to the large pub companies the option of buying beer on the open market at competitive prices will help keep pubs open and ensure the cost of a pint to consumers remains affordable."

Tim Page CAMRA Chief Executive

"For too long, the large undebted pubcos have exploited their tenants and taken more than is fair or sustainable from pub profits, now the House of Commons has clearly passed the select committee option of a market rent option which will stop the pubco rip-off of hugely marked up beer prices and excessive rents."

Greg Mulholland MP

"Today's vote will give us the chance to get a fairer deal for pubs and for pub landlords, which is long overdue. Pubs are vital hubs for communities in Sefton Central and are valued strongly by local people."

Bill Esterston MP for Crosby

"This was a victory for people power, for commonsense and for fairness and a victory a huge hard pressed publicans and their customers. I thank all MPs who had the courage to listen to their constituent licensees, CAMRA members and campaigners who have been campaigning for years to end what CAMRA call the pub scandal."

Greg Mulholland MP

The Dispensary Liverpool

Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2010 and 2011



Liverpool CAMRA PUB OF EXCELLENCE 2014



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

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

Up to **8 BEERS**

Available at any one time kept in superb condition

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

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



Good News for Real Ale



UK has more Breweries per head than any other country in the world That’s one brewery for every 50,000 people in Numbers

1472 - breweries in the UK
170 - breweries opened in the last twelve months
10% - the annual growth rate in brewery openings
8,000 plus - the number of different real ales now produced

Younger Drinkers Switch to Real Ale

More than a third of young people aged 18 to 24 have tried real ale and of those 87% intend to drink real ale again.

■ Three new breweries open every week in the UK. There are now over 1,472 breweries in Britain and the vast majority of these mainly brew cask ale.

■ Cask ale is recruiting new drinkers. In most parts of the country and most styles of outlet, old stereotypes are fading. Women and younger drinkers continue to convert to cask – though some licensees are failing to recognise the evolving profile of drinkers, and the opportunities this presents.

Cask Matters New Website

Cask Matters is an informal partnership of industry and consumer organisations, brewers and retailers who care about the future of our national drink and seek to work collectively to build awareness of, and opportunities for, cask ale. Our vision is to make Cask Matters a one-stop shop for cask ale

www.cask-marque.co.uk/cask-matters

The Cask Report 2014

This report is produced annually by national beer writer Pete Brown to review the trends in the cask ale (real ale) market in pubs and brewing. Below are the main findings for 2014, showing that real ale is again on the rise both in the pub and the brewery.

■ Cask ale is in volume growth, outperforming the on-trade beer market by 4.5%. The UK now drinks 634million pints of cask ale every year.

■ Cask ale is increasing its rate of sale– more pubs are stocking more cask ales, and selling more as a result.

■ Cask ale is increasing its market share. One in six pints of beer served in pubs is cask ale. Almost 60% of total on trade ale is now cask, with keg share declining sharply.

This website contains facts and figures which we think you will find useful, as well as information on training and the latest news and market research. You will also find the annual Cask Report which is an annual summary of the cask ale market for use by licensees, other members of the beer industry, the media and interested consumers.

You can sign up to our monthly newsletter here and we would also welcome any contributions. Please email these, we’d particularly like to hear from you if you are a licensee who can provide details of the importance of cask ale to your pub and any interesting and innovative ways that you use cask ale to grow your sales. This could include tastings, meet the brewer, food and beer matching or if you’ve received some useful support from a brewer that you’d like to share

St George's Hall Liverpool

WINTER Ales Festival

Thurs January 22nd - Sat 24th 2015

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Ales from 100+ Breweries Across the UK

Organised by



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BREWERY

PRINCIPAL
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Sessions in the
Main Hall

Continental Beers
& Lagers

Tickets sales and details visit:
www.stgeorghall.liverpoolbeerfestival.com
Telephone: 0151 933 9660

Locally Sourced Food

VIP Reserved Tables
Available

Tim Page



CAMRA has announced Tim Page as its new Chief Executive.

Tim who started work on 1st November, is replacing Mike Benner who left in June to become the Managing Director at SIBA, the Society for Independent Brewers.

Mr Page brings a wealth of experience from the charitable sector, having previously held positions as Chief Executive of the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) and former National Director of homeless charity Emmaus UK. He also has a military career background. His posts include;

CAMRA Appoints New Chief Executive

- Chief Executive at East Anglian Air Ambulance
- Director at Support Team Consultants Limited ;
- Director at Class Consultants;
- Consultant at The Ogden Trust ; Consultant at Heropreneurs
- Director at Emmaus UK
- Deputy Director at Ministry of Defence DCC(A)
- Middle East Defence Specialist at Ministry of Defence: Department of Overseas Military Activities
- College Commander at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
- Infantry Battalion Commander at The 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment
- Various appointments at The Royal Anglian Regiment Education
- Army Command and Staff College
- University of Exeter
- Bishops Stortford College

of building, growing and improving the structure, performance and effectiveness of organisations. I am an experienced and entrepreneurial manager, practised in identifying and exploiting opportunities and with highly-developed analytical, planning and delivery skills. An expert in marketing and communication, project management and the leadership of multi-disciplinary teams.'

Tim said;

"I am absolutely thrilled to be joining CAMRA as Chief Executive and look forward to meeting the volunteers when I start work in November. The Campaign has an outstanding reputation which appears to me to be the result of its large membership, its huge number of hard-working and committed volunteers and its highly-competent and professional team of employees. My aim is to continue to develop CAMRA as both the universally-recognised representative and the most-authoritative voice of real ale drinkers and pub-goers in the UK. Colin Valentine, CAMRA National Chairman, said; "CAMRA is very pleased to welcome Tim Page as our new Chief Executive and look forward to seeing him further cement CAMRA's place as the voice of beer drinkers within the beer and pub industry."

His LinkedIn entry states;

'I am a dynamic Chief Executive and National Director, strategist, planner and change manager, with wide experience of the Public and Charitable sectors. Having led two charities through periods of considerable change, and after service in the Army, I possess considerable knowledge

**CAMRA
Membership
November
2014 is
167,452**



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

The WHEATSHEAF

Public House and Restaurant

The Wheatsheaf is a unique building which boasts a number of exciting and homely rooms. The fantastic bar and pool room is perfect for those sports enthusiasts. They contain a number of legendary memorabilia, and two huge big screens to watch the latest sporting events.

Visit us today to avoid missing out on fantastic, food, service and atmosphere.

The pub is a British heritage building, as its historic interior has remained intact for many years which adds to its traditional and architectural importance.

The unique building attracts customers from all over the country and even international visitors. The slanted' floors alone, are worth visiting the business for! The traditional and homely decor provides the perfect surrounding for a family occasion. The building boasts a fantastic beer garden and bowling green, which is an ideal place to spend a hot summer's day, and if that wasn't enough the sports bar exhibits a vast range of memorabilia for those sports enthusiasts!

The Wheaty - Real Ale Real Food

visit: thewheaty.com



Visit us on facebook at www.facebook.com/TheWheatsheafOfficial for all the latest updates on what sporting events are being shown at the Wheatsheaf.



Our award winning food is definitely worth visiting the pub for. We serve fresh, fast and home cooked food for every occasion. Our homemade chunky chips are the best around! We would advise to book a table, especially on weekends to avoid disappointment.



Mill lane Sutton Leach St Helens Telephone 01744 813994

CAMRA Beer Festivals 2015



CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival at Metropolitan Cathedral Crypt Thursday 19th to Saturday 21st February 2015
See advert back page

CAMRA Manchester Beer and Cider Festival 21st to 24th January 2015

At the Velodrome Manchester National Cycling Centre. With over 500 beers, ciders and perries on offer, Manchester Beer & Cider Festival 2015 will be even bigger and better than the debut 2014 event. The festival will now take over the whole of the Velodrome including both the floor in the centre of the track and the whole of the concourse area.

Around half the beers will be located on new bars on the concourse area with step free access and in close proximity to thousands of seats overlooking the iconic Velodrome track where once more British Cycling's Team GB Olympians will train every day (as well as many other local cycling clubs and schools). Food outlets will also be split between the floor & concourse.

The cask bars will be joined by a massive selection of ciders & perries and the Bière Sans Frontières bar will be back with an even greater selection of draught and bottled beers from the USA, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Czech Republic and more. For more information and advance ticket sales see www.manchesterbeerfestival.org.uk

CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival Derby Wednesday 11th to Saturday 14th February at the Roundhouse Derby

(former locomotive roundhouse now part of University of Derby) adjacent to Derby Railway Station.

400 plus beers and ciders. Details www.nwaf.org.uk

Four Brewery Bars have been agreed: multi award winning Blue Monkey from Nottingham; innovative North Star from Derbyshire both in the Main Hall,

Derby's very own Brunswick Brewing Company in the Music Marquee and Yorkshire's shining gem Brass Castle in the Carriage Room.

The National Winter Ales Festival is home to CAMRA's prestigious Champion Winter Beer of Britain Competition which sees the four winter styles of beer (porters, stouts, old ales/strong milds and barley wine/strong old ales) being gathered from across the UK to be judged and a winner declared. Though the festival itself has lots of pale beers and golden ales to choose from too.

There are no advance tickets as this is a pay on the door event. Well behaved and supervised under 18s are welcomed until 19:00 each evening, after which they must leave due to a licensing requirement.

CAMRA Great British Beer Festival 2015 London -

Tuesday 11th to Saturday 15th August 2015 at Olympia London

400 plus real ales, Biere Sans Frontiere Bar, Real Cider and Perry Bar

Pubs and the People's Culture

Sheffield Carols - Keeping the People's Culture Alive in the Pubs

'While shepherd's watched their flocks by night, All seated on the ground.....!'

It's coming up to carol singing time again. However, which tune you sing to that familiar set of words may depend upon which pub you are in. If you are in one of the several pubs in south Yorkshire where traditional carols are sung, the chances are that you won't be using **'Winchester Old'**. Instead you may be singing to **'Lyngham', 'Eythorn', 'Liverpool', 'Old Foster', 'Pentonville', 'Shaw Lane'** or one of many others. This is an example of a carol with a well known set of words, though many tunes, but there are many texts you may be less familiar with.

The Importance of the Pub

The area around Sheffield is a place where pubs have played a major role in developing and maintaining the People's Culture. Sheffield Carols are a long established tradition with people gathering in the pub to sing their own Christmas Carols. The pubs have kept this tradition and the distinctive musical and singing styles alive. From the Sunday following Armistice Day in November and throughout December you can still visit the pubs and join in the communal singing. Remember that this is a people's community event so respect the local traditions.

The pubs have been central to maintaining the tradition of the Sheffield Carols. Without the

pubs the carols might have died out years ago. As you might expect, traditional songs can generally be accompanied by real ale, often from a local brewery, as in the case of the **Royal Hotel, Dungworth**, where you can enjoy the splendid **Bradfield Yorkshire Farmer Bitter**. At other pubs you might find **Abbeydale, Stancile** or a range of guest beers.



Royal Hotel
Licencee
Dave Lambert

CAMRA repeatedly stresses the importance of the pub to the nation's social and cultural life. The story of the Sheffield Carols show how the pub has given haven to an important and impressive part of our cultural heritage – Sing On in the Pub!

What are Sheffield Carols?

The Sheffield Carols predate modern carols by over a century. This thriving local tradition of community carol singing takes place in pubs, homes, chapels and churches. Unlike the Victorian carols with which we are familiar, the tunes and words were largely the work of artisans and tradesfolk. It was never the music of the elite. A carol such as **'Hark, Hark! What News Those Angels Bring?'** may be sung to many different tunes. One of the most



The Big Set in 1906

frequently sung is **'Good News'** by John Hall of Sheffield Park, a blacksmith who died in the poorhouse in 1794. The same text is also sung to **'New Hark', 'Old Hark', 'Tyre Mill'** and others depending on location.

The carols were originally sung in churches accompanied by self-taught musicians who were usually local workers. Village bands, again mainly local artisans, provided the music in the churches. The musical style was grounded in the local vernacular, mainly using string and woodwind instruments.

However from the 1830s onwards the village bands and self taught musicians were driven out of the churches across the country by the Oxford Tractarian Movement, which introduced church organs and standardised tunes and words. This is the origin of the carols we are familiar with today.



Royal Hotel

The village band had always been viewed with suspicion by the hierarchy who disliked a popular grassroots movement with self taught musicians who were as likely to be found playing at country dances as for church services. Thomas Hardy's **'Under**

the Greenwood Tree' (1872) gives a fictional account of the demise of such a band.

Having been banished from the church the self taught musicians and singers kept their local oral tradition alive by singing and playing in the pub. However as time passed the oral carol tradition began to die out in many parts of the country. It was in South



Royal Hotel, Dungworth

Yorkshire and Derbyshire that the tradition lived on in the pubs.

Local and Regional Differences

The repertoire of carols is extensive and also localised. Different sets of words and tunes are sung in different places. Although there is a core of carols that are sung at most venues, each particular place has its own mini-tradition. The repertoire at two nearby places can vary widely. The carols are in harmony, but exactly what is sung depends upon the singers. Traditional gender divides do not apply – you sing whichever part appeals. In some pubs the carols have a musical accompaniment whilst in others they are sung unaccompanied. The style is exuberant and crucially encourages participation.

There is also something of a north – south divide in the range of carols sung, with differences in repertoire between the Sheffield and Derbyshire areas.

The Carols Nearly Died Out – The Revival

Ian Russell, who recently retired as Director of the Elphinstone Institute at Aberdeen University, has spent over forty years from the 70s onwards visiting the pubs where carols were sung and recording the music and

interviews with the local singers. This labour of love captured the oral tradition at a time that the carols were in danger of dying out. Amongst much other work Ian has edited **'The Sheffield Book of Village Carols'**, which contains the words and music of forty four carols. He also directs a biennial Festival of Village Carols.

Ian's work led to an increased awareness of the oral Sheffield Carol tradition and helped stem the tide of their disappearance. Increased awareness of the carols led to additional singers visiting the pubs to participate in sessions and new people from the folk movement came to support the singing. The majority of singers are local to the area, however. As well as the communal carols,



different pubs have their own regular singers who sing solo, and will tend to sing pieces peculiar to the event, although most will have a large repertoire of songs beyond this. Sheffield Carols are now a well established part of the nation's oral and pub tradition.

If you are not local to the area a first encounter with the carols may well be through one of the many CDs of carol collections. My own first encounter with Sheffield Carols was through a CD of carol collections recorded at various venues, **'A People's Carol: A Christmas Singing Tradition Recorded in South Yorkshire Pubs'** – Leader 1974.

Pubs Where the Carols are Sung

There are a few places with regular sings: **The Royal** at Dungworth; **The Blue Ball** at Worrall; **Wharnclyffe Arms** at Wharnclyffe Side; the **Malthouse** at Ecclesfield; and the **Travellers Rest**, Oughtibridge, for example. Other regular places include Castleton,

Hathersage, Foolow, Bamford and Lodge Moor. The **Traditional Sword Teams** at Handsworth and Grenoside end up on Boxing Day in a pub, with the local carols. **The Loxley and Stannington Bands** are



Wharnclyffe Arms

very active in the week before Christmas. There are still a few places such as Eyam where the tradition continues of singing on a Christmas tour round the village, at various houses or at a central place. Wherever you go, keep singing!

Many parts of the country would have had their own carol singing tradition but these had mostly disappeared unlike South Yorkshire and Derbyshire. There is increasing interest in reviving these local carolling traditions, so you may come across lesser



Blue Ball

known carols being sung in a pub near you.

'Sweet Bells, Sweet Chiming Christmas Bells'

Visitors are welcomed at pub carol singing sessions but please respect the local traditions and the fact that locals are likely to have their favourite places and their party piece carols. Most pubs are elbow to elbow given the numbers and small size of many bars, so expect to stand and to join in with



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the singing. Arrive early – don't expect a prime place if you don't arrive well advance - and help the publican by returning glasses. You may find pubs simplify the ordering by having just one cask ale on during the singing session. For further information see www.localcarols.org.uk

Good Beer, Good Company, Exuberant Singing – Good Reasons to Visit the Pub!

'We singers make bold, as in days of old,

To celebrate Christmas and bring you good cheer."

Helen McCall

A Happy Christmas and New Year to All Our Readers from MerseyAle

More On the 'Wirral Beer Desert' Article - Challenge Issued

The feature in MerseyAle Spring 2014 entitled Wirral Beer Desert continues to generate comment. This was the invitation made by one of the article authors, Bob Lockhart, in the Autumn edition; "The whole idea was to raise debate on a subject close to real ale drinkers hearts and which also causes the three signatories to the article immense frustration. Keep the debate going via MerseyAle and over the bar counter." Well reader and former CAMRA member Rob Shaw has done just that and has issued a challenge to Wirral CAMRA.

The Challenge - 800 to 1

I have lived on the Wirral for the majority of my life and frequently enjoy drinking in our many fine pubs. Although I have made it around the majority of our pubs, there are still some hidden gems that I am yet to make it to. With criticisms of Wirral being a beer desert, I have decided to investigate whether those pubs I enjoy are just a mirage by challenging myself in 2015 to have at least a pint in all Wirral pubs serving Real Ale.

I formally and very publicly challenge Wirral CAMRA to achieve the same.

Can one person achieve what a branch of 800+ people regularly fails to do? Can one person achieve what is the very minimum any branch should be striving to achieve? If I with my limited free time and funds can make it around the 120+ pubs while you as a collective group cannot, what does this say about you? Please understand that by not accepting my challenge then you accept that statements issued such as

the following one in 'Wirral Beer Desert' in the March MerseyAle are incorrect - "As a measure of the lack of good real ale pubs on the Wirral, the local CAMRA branch has, for many years, struggled to fill the number of entries that the Good Beer Guide has allocated to the branch." So what say you Wirral CAMRA? The rules of the challenge are as follows:

1. A list of pubs will be published on my blog on January 1st 2015.
2. Each pub must be visited at least once
3. A minimum of a pint of beer, or beer making up to that quantity must be consumed in each pub (two halves, three thirds etc)
4. If a pub is shut, or closed for refurbishment at time of visiting, it must be revisited when/if open.
5. If a pub closes down permanently, it will be marked as such on the list and will be no longer in contention
6. Pubs discovered to be serving real ale, or brand new openings throughout 2015 are optional and will be marked as such on the updated list.
7. The list will only be updated to make those as described above.
8. Records of the available beer should be taken.
9. The persons/people visiting should let themselves be known to the staff during a visit.
10. Whatpub records should be compared.
11. CAMRA must obtain qualifying beer scores (3 different persons) on each pub.

Rob Shaw

Wirral Wanderings Wirral's First Micro Pub to Open in Liscard

Wirral's first micro pub is to open shortly in the former Wirral Music



shop premises at 56 Mill Lane, Liscard CH44 5UG. Watch out for more news in the next edition of MerseyAle.

MerseyRAle West Kirby Round Article Update

The article appeared in MerseyAle Spring 2014 edition and there have been the following recent developments;

Spitting Feathers West Kirby Tap Voted CAMRA Wirral Pub of the Season. The West Kirby Tap, Grange Road, West Kirby was awarded the **Wirral Branch Summer Pub of the Season** on Wednesday 3rd September.

West Kirby **Ring O Bells**. Has a new licensees Ben and Louise who have moved from the **Pheasant**, a Greene King pub, in Birstall West Yorkshire, where they won the CAMRA Heavy Woollen Branch Pub of the Season Award Spring 2014. He significantly improved the range of real ales at the Pheasant and is looking to do the same at the Ring O Bells.

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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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Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker crowned Champion Beer of Britain THE GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL

Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker (formerly named Timothy Taylor Best Bitter), was crowned the 'Best Beer' in Britain at the **Great British Beer Festival**, Olympia, London, winning the 2014 Champion Beer of Britain Award.

The West Yorkshire brewed real ale was judged the Supreme Champion over a host of other finalists in seven

different beer categories (Bitters, Best Bitters, Strong Bitters, Golden Ales, Milds, Winter Beers, and the Speciality class), including beers from both small microbrewers and large regional brewers.

Nik Antona, Champion Beer of Britain Director said:

"It is fantastic to announce Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker as the Champion Beer of Britain 2014. This full flavoured bitter is a modern classic that is as impressive today as the day it was first brewed."

Head Brewer Peter Eells said,

"I'm speechless. We work very hard to produce great beers and we really believe this is the best beer we can brew – so to have it acknowledged in such an important competition is absolutely fantastic."

Managing Director Charles Dent added,

"We're absolutely delighted. It's our favourite, it's the brewers favourite, it's the beer that you drink if you're drinking with us and it's named after one of our favourite pubs – The Boltmakers."

Boltmaker was first produced in the 1930s when the then Timothy Taylor sales manager Jack Tillotson asked for a beer to compete with Barnsley Bitter, the market leader in South Yorkshire at the time.

The Silver Champion Beer of Britain Award went to Oakham Citra, whilst the Bronze Award went to Salopian, Darwin's Origin.

Winners of the Seven Beer Categories

Mild category-

Gold – Bank Top, Dark Mild

Silver – Branscombe Vale, Mild

Bronze – Castle Rock, Black Gold

Bitters category-

Gold – Timothy Taylor, Boltmaker

Silver – Mighty Oak, Captain Bob

Joint Bronze – Flowerpots, Flowerpots Bitter & Sambrook's Wandle Ale

Best Bitters-

Gold – Salopian, Darwin's Origin

Silver – Red Willow, Directionless

Joint Bronze – Purity, Mad Goose & Langton, Inclined Plane Bitter

Golden Ales-

Gold – Oakham, Citra

Silver – Hawkshead, Cumbrian Five Hop

Bronze – Salopian, Hop Twister

Strong Bitters-

Gold – Church End, Fallen Angel

Silver – Blue Monkey, Ape Ale

Bronze – Loch Ness, HoppyNESS

Speciality Beers-

Gold – Saltaire, Triple Chocoholic

Silver – Offbeat, Way Out Wheat

Bronze – Peak Ales, Chatsworth Gold

Champion Bottled Beer of Britain winners

(Sponsored by Beer Hawk)

Gold – Marble, Chocolate Marble

Silver – St Austell, Proper Job

Bronze – Spire, Prince Igor Imperial Russian Stout

Champion Winter Beer of Britain (from category winners announced in January 2014)- **Cairngorm**,

Black Gold (Stouts Category)

Dunham Massey, Dunham Porter (Porter Category)

Exe Valley, Winter Glow (Old Ales & Strong Milds)

Kinver, Over the Edge (Barley Wines & Strong Old Ales)

The Champion Beer of Scotland 2014 is Dark Moor



Kelburn Brewing Dark Moor was crowned Champion Beer of Scotland 2014 at CAMRA's Scottish Real Ale Festival.

Dark Moor is a dark fruity ale with blackcurrant and liquorice undertones. Dark Moor is no

stranger to winning as it also saw success in CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2013, taking Gold in the Old Ale/Strong Mild class and bronze in the competition overall. And Kelburn has won Scotland's top beer honour before with its Cart Blanche in 2006.

Ayr Brewing Company's Rabbie's Porter was runner up and **Fyne Ales' Jarl** was in third place

The Belvedere

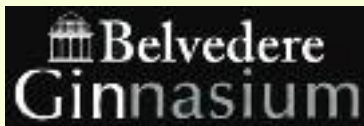
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Involving People in CAMRA –



Keeping in Touch with Facebook

This is the second in a series of articles on how to keep in touch with what's happening in our Branch Area.

One of the easiest ways to keep in touch with news and events is through Facebook. Facebook has more than **750 million** active users who, on average, share more than **30 billion** pieces of content per month. What does that mean? It means it's a great way to keep in touch with things that are important to you. As well as friends having Facebook accounts, lots of pubs and breweries also do. And CAMRA branches are no different.

If you haven't got a Facebook account there are plenty articles on the internet on how to set one up, including on the Facebook site.

Friends and Pages

Most people you connect to on Facebook are 'Friends'. However, a lot of business and organisations have 'pages'. With a page you 'like' it. Depending on your privacy settings, normally the only people who can see what you 'liked' is your friends and the administrators of

the actual page. However if you make a comment on a page, other people who have liked that page will see it and who wrote it.

When you 'like' our page the administrators will not be able to read any of your profile if you have it set to friends only. Unless you tell us, we will not know where you drink, what you drink or where you went on holiday.

There are 5 administrators managing the page, all of whom are Branch Committee Members. This ensures that we are following not only Facebook policies but also CAMRA policies and guidelines. If you have a complaint regarding the page you can complain to the **Chair of the Branch Committee. Liverpool Facebook Page**

To find our page, please type in 'https://www.facebook.com/CAMRALiverpool' or search for 'CAMRA Liverpool'.

Once you have found the page please 'like' us by clicking like at the top of the page. To ensure that you receive notifications click the arrow next to the 'like' or 'liked' button and choose 'Get Notifications'. I suggest you do this for any page you have liked, otherwise the latest news will not appear in your newsfeed.

Once you are on the page you can check out 'Events', 'Photos' and 'News Feed'. Please comment on any posts. You can also post to the page yourself, for example pub news. Explore the page, and don't forget to 'share' the page and news with your friends.

Mel James – Henry

Higsonsians Letter

Dear Sirs,
I was interested to read the tribute to Steve Downing in the Autumn edition of "Merseyale", particularly the fact that he visited all the Higson's pubs in 1988.

My interest in this is a personal one, since aided by the "Old Higsonian's Handbook", which had a list of Higson's outlets inside, four of us did this same quest in 1983. If memory serves, there were 160 or so pubs listed.

The low point was finding our way to Rochdale on a wet evening, only to discover that the pub had been demolished since the book went to print!

Much as I miss Higson's, the thought of travelling by public transport to Sutton (nr.Macclesfield), Fleetwood, Meliden (Prestatyn) and Croston, amongst other places, makes me glad that I am now too old (or wise!) to do such things.

Yours,
John Pritchard



Andy McGowan and John Pritchard

The Globe

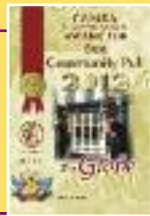
The **Globe** is a small, very cosy traditional two roomed local opposite Central Station and close to main shopping area. It is a very lively pub and is popular with both locals and visitors alike. Watch out for the sloping floor!

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



MerseyAle Cider News

The Liverpool CAMRA Oscars presentation night in July (MerseyAle Autumn 2014) saw us award two cider specific accolades.

First - Liverpool Cider Pub of the Year 2014 -

The Augustus John

This top award was presented to the Augustus John in Peach Street, off Brownlow Hill, on the Liverpool University Campus. The "AJ" has now taken the top award for four consecutive years (2011-2014). The Cider Pub of the Year award is scored on several criteria, for example, the range of ciders, the price, the quality and the guaranteed availability of the product. The AJ regularly offer around seven real ciders from a changing list and at a fair price too, making it always worth a visit. Despite being on the university campus the AJ is a regular pub open to one and all and as if it needed to be said embraces CAMRA values, is listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide and stocks a good selection of real ales.

Whilst the Branch recognises that most pubs can't offer seven real ciders we will support anyone that can offer one or two and we believe that there is definitely profit for pubs in the growing popularity of real cider.

Second - Special Cider Award - Rosie's Cider

Our second branch award is one that is only occasionally awarded and that is the "Special Cider



Steve Hughes (left) and Geoff Edwards

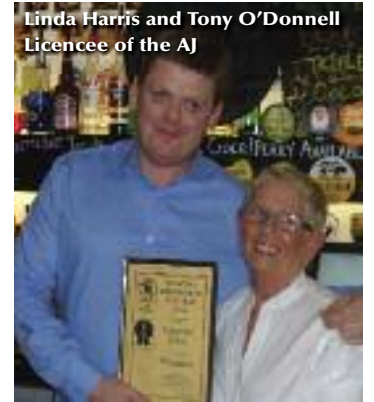
Award". The Special Cider Award is given to a person or establishment that has made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of real cider in our branch area. In 2014 that award was presented to **Steve Hughes** the farmer and cider maker at **Rosie's Cider** in North Wales. With hundreds of his own apple trees Steve grows the fruit and then makes a range of high quality ciders and personally delivers them to pubs. Steve's "**Black Bart**" cider was voted Cider of the Festival at the CAMRA Liverpool Beer Festival in 2012 and is always a best seller. Currently Rosie's ciders are available in eight pubs in the Liverpool area and their presence greatly increases the variety and choice of real cider in our branch area. We understand that Steve and his family have made tough choices in going in to full time cider production and we are happy to honour the fruits of their labour. Augustus John Triumphs with **CAMRA Regional Cider Pub of the Year Award 2014**



The 'AJ' has also been crowned as the Merseyside and Cheshire Regional Cider Pub of the Year in 2012 and 2014. The latest Regional Award for 2014 was presented at the AJ by the **CAMRA Regional Cider Officer Linda Harris**. The AJ then went forward to the CAMRA National Cider Pub of the Year competition which was later won by the **Castle Inn in Dorset** (see next page).

Liverpool CAMRA Cider Month Initiatives During October/November the branch endeavours to promote cider in different ways, this year we implemented two new ideas.

Liverpool CAMRA Cider Month Initiatives During October/November the branch endeavours to promote cider in different ways, this year we implemented two new ideas.



Linda Harris and Tony O'Donnell
Licencee of the AJ

One - Liverpool Beer Festival Cider Bar - Young Members

Young Members that wish to work on the cider bar at our festival in February 2015 should email cider@liverpoolcamra.org.uk as soon as possible to register their details.

Second - An email CAMRA 'Cider in Liverpool' Newsletter

A new email newsletter is to be created that will allow us to advise cider lovers of events in the Liverpool area. We realise that sometimes MerseyAle's publication dates mean that we can't forewarn you about cider events in time which is a great shame. Also if you use Twitter you can check our feed. We aim to release the first newsletter before the February festival and your email address will be kept confidential. Register for the newsletter at cider@liverpoolcamra.org.uk

Liverpool Cider Pub News - 21 Branch Pubs Now Selling Real Cider

As mentioned earlier, real cider is growing in popularity in the Liverpool branch area and currently twenty-one pubs are selling real cider regularly. Brand new additions to the list are, the **Edinburgh** (Wavertree), **Rhubarb** (Lark Lane), **the Masonic** (Garston), see the full list on our website, accurate to September 2014.

The **Caledonia** on Catharine St hosted a week long Beer & Cider Festival, Nov 24 - 30th.

Cider Reports by Steve Berks Liverpool CAMRA Cider Officer

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Ciders That are NOT Real – Beware!

Below is a list of the most common ciders that CAMRA does not recognise as being real. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

The most common reasons a cider or perry is not considered to be real are that it is carbonated, pasteurised, micro-filtered, or concentrate juice has been used. Many non real ciders contain as little as 30% apple juice. Real Cider is made from 100% natural apple juice with no additives or chemicals and is served naturally still. The most common ciders confused as being real are:

- **Addlestones**
 - Aspalls
 - **Bulmers Traditional**
 - Kingstone Press (Aston Manor)
 - **Magners**
 - Rattler
 - **Stowford Press**
 - Strongbow
 - **Taunton Traditional**
 - Thatchers Gold
 - **Westons Ice**
 - Westons in bottles
 - **any cider with any non apple/pear fruit (for flavouring) added**
 - any cider with honey, herbs or spices added
- However, there are many others that are also NOT Real Ciders , for example:**
- **Amber Harvest (Aston Manor); Ashton Press; Aspall;**
 - Briska; Brothers; Bulmers;
 - **Chardolini Perry (Aston Manor); Crumpton (Aston Manor); Diamond White; Druids Celtic Cider (Aston Manor);**
 - Dry Blackthorn; Duchy Originals (Aston Manor);
 - **Friels; Frosty Jack's;**
 - Gaymer's; Golden Valley (Aston Manor);
 - **Harry Sparrow (Aspall); Hereford Orchard (Aston Manor);**
 - Jacques
 - **K Cider; Knights (Aston Manor); Kopparberg**
 - Magners; Malvern Gold (Aston Manor); Merrydown
 - **Natch**
 - Oakleys; Old Moors (Devon Cider Co.)
 - **Red C; Rekorderlig; Robinsons**
 - SKU; Samuel Smith's; Scrumpy Dog; Scrumpy Jack; Sharp's Orchard Cornish Cider; St Helier; Stella Cidre; Stowford Press; Strongbow; Symonds
 - **Taunton; Tomos Watkin**
 - WKD Core; Woodpecker

Country Charm Shines Through as Castle Inn Wins CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year 2014



A traditional 16th century thatched roofed pub in a small Dorset village has walked away with CAMRA's top Real Cider award after being named Cider Pub of the Year 2014. **The Castle Inn**, West Lulworth, has been crowned the best place in the UK to enjoy a pint of Real Cider by CAMRA.

The pub has been run by the Halliday family for over thirty years – Alex Halliday is the current landlord and the third generation of his family to run the pub,

"It's absolutely fantastic to win the National Cider Pub of the Year competition. We've been pushing real cider for years now and hope that us winning this award will put Dorset cider on the map."
Alex Halliday, Landlord at The Castle Inn.

Located near to the beautiful Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door of the Jurassic Coastline, the pub is a hit with regulars and visitors alike, with the choice of real ciders and perries being a significant draw for many.

"At any one time we have around fifty to sixty different real ciders available in the pub and we believe that once people try proper real cider they will realise how much better it is than commercially produced stuff, which often only contains around thirty percent apple juice!"

Real Cider is made from 100% natural apple juice with no additives or chemicals and is served naturally still, unlike commercially produced cider which is force-carbonated to

give it fizz and, as Alex mentions above, can often contain as little as 30% apple juice. Real perry is produced in exactly the same way as real cider but with pear juice instead of apple juice. Sarah Newson is the organiser of the Cider pub of the Year competition and had this to say about The Castle Inn,

"The Castle Inn is a very worthy winner of this much coveted award. Their commitment to real cider and perry is second to none and the quality of drinks they have in the pub at any one time is truly staggering. As well as that the pub is a beautiful place to enjoy a drink, with all the country charm you could hope for."

CAMRA is urging pubs around the country to try stocking a real cider and to encourage their patrons to give this traditional British drink a try.

The other three finalists were the Rising Sun in Berkhamsted, the Railway Arms in Downham Market and the Hop and Vine in Hull.

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Our heritage points to visits from some iconic guests including Charles Dickens (employed for a day here in 1860, as a Special Constable to research a book), Frankie Goes to Hollywood (who rehearsed here in the early 1980s and wrote most of their hits in one of our cells) and Dame Joan Bakewell (who launched her most recent book here) to name but a few. Come and take your seat in an original 1850 cell, and enjoy a wonderful pint and a bowl of scouse...we promise not to lock you up!"

We carry a great selection of cask, always well-conditioned, and at a very competitive price of just **£2.40 a pint**

"The Governor" (3.8%) by Marco Pierre White, courtesy of JW Lees, is a firm favourite with our customers (and staff!). So much so, it's a permanent feature at Liverpool One Bridewell.

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



Info@liverpoolonebridewell.com
Events email:
paul@liverpoolonebridewell.com

MerseyAlePubnews

City Centre Pub News

Pens at the Ready – New Real Ale Outlet Opens on Hope Street

The long awaited return of Paddy Byrne to the Street of Culture, Bars and Restaurants is imminent. His new venture, in association with several of the original Everyman Bistro team including head chef Tom Gill, is due to open early December.



The Pen Factory is Paddy's new take on combining quality food with quality real ale, real cider and wines. Located in the former Annexe building, which happens to be next door to the new Everyman Theatre, this is not a retake of the original Bistro, rather a fresh take on his long established values of focusing on quality ingredients served in a relaxing environment. The premises have been extensively reworked to create a large space on different levels including a much appreciated sun trap rear courtyard for drinking and dining. A long bar featuring the array of hand pumps leads towards the kitchen area at the rear of the room. An advert to recruit staff revealed; **"With 120 covers, the big open space of the old Pen Factory will be Liverpool city centre's newest restaurant and bar. With its Snug, wood burning stove and 'ingle nook' seating, Pen Factory can operate like a traditional pub, serving specialist beers and wines not often available by the glass. Teas, coffees and snacks are served from breakfast time onwards."**

There will be a range of changing guest real ales plus real cider. The food will include a variety of tapas dishes (probably guided by the Beer Tapas menu offered at the **Hawkshead Brewery**. Staveley, Cumbria, which is designed to offer a range of smaller dishes to complement beers as well as wines.

There will also be larger meals and the famous range of salads is reported to be returning, along with the home baked quiches and breads. We await to see if the equally famous desserts likewise make their return. Unlike the former Bistro, it will offer table service and the opportunity to sit outside in the courtyard.

It was three and a half years ago that the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic trumpeter Brendan Ball blew the Last Post from behind the bar and the original Bistro closed its doors for the last time, bringing to a close an end to an era spanning 1970 to 2011, with barely a dry eye left in the house. The King is dead, long live the King. A new era opens in December 2014.

Next door, congratulations to the Everyman Theatre, which has won the most prestigious prize for architecture, The Royal Institute of British Architecture's Stirling Prize, for its new building and the way the design and operation reflects and responds to the community. Perhaps someone might like to have a word with the management of the new Bistro downstairs, see MerseyAle Autumn 2014, **'Lost the Plot and Its Heart and Soul.'**

Also on Hope Street, The 23 Club at the Clove Hitch has set up an area for off sales of bottled beers from around Britain and further afield. All bottles are also available for drinking in the bar.

Inn Liverpool on Renshaw Street has been closed and has now been rebranded as **Sals**. It has been separated from the Caesar's Palace restaurant next door that has become a Chinese restaurant. There was no real ale available at Sals when it first reopened, but **Liverpool Craft** beers could reappear in due course.

Mello Mello on Slater Street, Liverpool's only community collective run bar, which featured a wide range of live performances and art, plus real ale from Liverpool Craft Brewery, ceased to trade from 22nd September. Here is part of the statement from their website; Despite our best efforts we have been unable to meet the huge increase in business rates imposed on us two

years ago, and have battled the financial difficulties that several burglaries and the ever-evolving fabric of the city centre have incurred. We are deeply saddened to be closing our doors, but also truly proud of what has been achieved within these walls.

MelloMello began life in 2007 as a completely volunteer-led organisation, in a derelict space, and has grown organically through the hard work of its staff and the community into a catalytic creative hub, a grassroots cultural monument, and a welcoming and warm environment, brimming and buzzing with energy, passion, art, music, dance, comedy, food, drink, laughter and love.

This reflects the development pressures in the Rope Walks area from big investment developers, which threatened to demolish the **Kazimier** with its real ale courtyard bar and the Cream music venue in the Wolstenholme Square area to replace them with, wait for it, yet more apartments and student accommodation - a case of demolishing the very artistic cultural activity that attracts people to live in the area in the first place. Happily the plans have now been changed to have serviced apartments instead that can be allowed to exist next to music venues.



The Kazimier Garden has been refurbished into its 'winter mode' including the 'railway carriage' again. Beers supplied by **Liverpool Craft** continue to be served.

MerseyAle hopes the Mello Mello business can be reborn elsewhere at some time in the near future.

The Camp and Furnace on Greenland Street in the Baltic Triangle area, has not been selling real ale recently and the hand pumps have now been removed. However, work

Ye Cracke

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Have a drink in John Lennon's Old Watering Hole

The AUGUSTUS JOHN

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

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- LocAle accredited • A Minimum of 6 Real Ciders available

The AJ

Opening Times
Monday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Tuesday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Wednesday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Thursday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Friday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Saturday 11.30am - 11.00pm
Sunday 12.00 noon - 11.00pm
Occasional

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to create a proper cellar for cask ale is due to start soon, which when completed, should enable real ale to reappear. Beers supplied by **Liverpool Craft Brewery** previously featured. The bar was praised for its food by the Observer newspaper, receiving a positive review from its restaurant reviewer Jay Rayner. Also on Greenland Street, the **Constellation Bar** is an innovative use of temporary wooden canopies to create a space for summer drinking. Created by the **Miller Bros** who have a workshop studio in the area, the canopies were erected in just three days and have a waffle like structure which Miller says, *"are easily movable, allowing the space to be reconfigured to accommodate the rolling program of arts events, performance, cinema screenings and a market."*

The bar currently does not serve real ale, but offers keg beer from Liverpool Craft. Constellations is the brainchild of two former Liverpool students, **Nick Baskerville** and **Becky Pope**, who have combined their talents into creating a 6,000 foot urban garden and reinventing a concrete shell into a space designed to host art, music, business and grassroots events.

The Pumphouse Pub Albert Dock is considering increasing the number of real ale pumps from 6 to 10. The



Greene King run pub is seeking to raise the real ale profile by planning a real ale event for Wednesday 21st of January 2015 which will also include pub food.

Congratulations to Delifonseca Dockside, Brunswick, food shop and restaurant, which stocks a wide range of quality bottled beers, which has won the **Observer Food Monthly National Independent Food Retailer of the Year Food Award 2014**. The Liverpool bars Camp & Furnace and **Berry & Rye** were runners-up in the 'Best Bar' category.

O'Neill's on Hanover Street now has two hand pumps to dispense beers supplied by Liverpool Organic.

The William Gladstone on North John Street was serving the **CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker**, during October. When I visited, though, I could not see anybody else drinking it.

The Mount Vernon, on the road of the same name, closed with little



notice and is now boarded up. There is a planning application to turn the building into student accommodation and to add additional storeys to the building. Hopefully this will not succeed as it would be a shame if such a classic 'flat iron' pub was lost, or the building radically changed. Major road schemes and demolition bulldozed the houses of the majority of the pub's clientele, the story of much of inner Liverpool.

Bootle Pub News

The Jawbone Tavern on Litherland Road in Bootle continues to sell a range of real ales. A house beer is brewed by **Liverpool Organic** is sometimes substituted by one of the brewer's regular beers. Other guest beers are available with **Upham Punter** being served on my last visit. Sister pub, the **Cat & Fiddle** on Stanley Road, also sells real ale and was serving **Camerons Ebony Fall** and **Big Lamp Bitter** on my recent visits.

South Liverpool Pub News

Frank's at 186 Smithdown Road is the new bar mentioned in MerseyAle Autumn 2014 issue. **Thwaites** beers have been available on my visits. A couple of blocks towards town is **Kelly's Dispensary**. The regular beers here are supplied by **J.W. Lees**, but the guest often comes from **Liverpool Organic** and on my last visit **Melwood Paleface** was available.

Not far away the Willow Bank on Smithdown Road has a new manager who hopes to restore the choice of real ales. There was a beer festival in November and Donnington SBA was available on my last visit, a beer I have not supped for a long time.

Woolton - The County Court on Quarry Street closed in October. Hopefully Punch Taverns will arrange for a new licensee and for the pub to reopen in the future.

Speke, The Noah's Ark. This former pub at the centre of Speke closed some years ago and was taken on by Speke Baptist church in 2009 to use the building as a community centre now named the Noah Centre. The final phase of work is now underway to create two meeting rooms on the top floor.

Another pub lost is the **Falstaff** on Gateacre Park Drive. For years cask beer was available, Tetley Mild and Bitter plus Jennings Bitter. Real Ale continued when it was rebadged as the Boulevard. Unfortunately, soon after it reverted to being the Falstaff, real ale was withdrawn and the pub closed a few years ago. It has now been demolished to make way for a development of 3-4 bedroom houses.

East Liverpool Pubs

The Stag & Rainbow on Queens Drive, West Derby, no longer has hand pumps after its recent refurbishment. Anybody staying at the attached Premier Inn wishing to drink real ale has to cross the road to the **Jolly Miller**. This John Barras



pub, (see Greene King Takeover Spirit Group page 53), promotes cask ale prominently both inside and outside. **Caledonian Deuchars** was my choice. Unfortunately real ale is not included in the meal deals. Along Mill Lane the **Halton Castle** was also selling national ales, apart drinkers.

Pub news continued on page 43

I Can See Clearly Now Through a Dispensary Window

Liverpool pubs have some fine etched glass windows but sadly a growing number are falling victim to mindless vandalism. What can be done to repair the damage? Well it is very expensive to create new etched glass windows but it is now possible to recreate the ornate designs using layers of vinyl film artwork and that is what has been done at the Dispensary.



The original windows were completely destroyed and the only way to reproduce them was to try and find a good quality old picture. After a lengthy search through old photographs on the



internet a suitable image was found. As you can see the oval shape with the Goat has been changed, for the new window Dave wanted the the word "Respicio" rather than "Robert Cain" The Latin word Respicio has many meanings, mainly: to look back, provide for, respect, have regard for.

To get the design etched directly on to the window glass would be prohibitively expensive so it was decided to produce them the same way the previous window panels were done. This was in a type of vinyl film in three layers to get the various shades of opacity to simulate etching and pick out individual lettering and patterns.



The artwork was done by Dennis Jones (MerseyAle graphic artist and Liverpool CAMRA member) approved by Dave and Pauline. The next thing to do was to get the skilled people who could produce the film panels and fit them. Dave decide upon Glassware Window Films in Runcorn. Within a few days of receiving the order the films for the main window and side window were done and ready to fit.

March 2014 the Glassware crew arrived and set about fitting the new window designs. The first thing to do was thoroughly clean the plain glass windows the films were to go on (1). Then the first plain film was peeled off its backing paper sprayed lightly with soapy water and squeegeed into place making sure no air bubbles were trapped underneath (2-3). The second film was positionned then peeled of its backing paper treated similarly as the first one and squeegeed into place (4-9).

Finally the last film was positionned and on (10-11) you can see the Glassware chap picking out the fine details on the oval with a surgical scalpel.



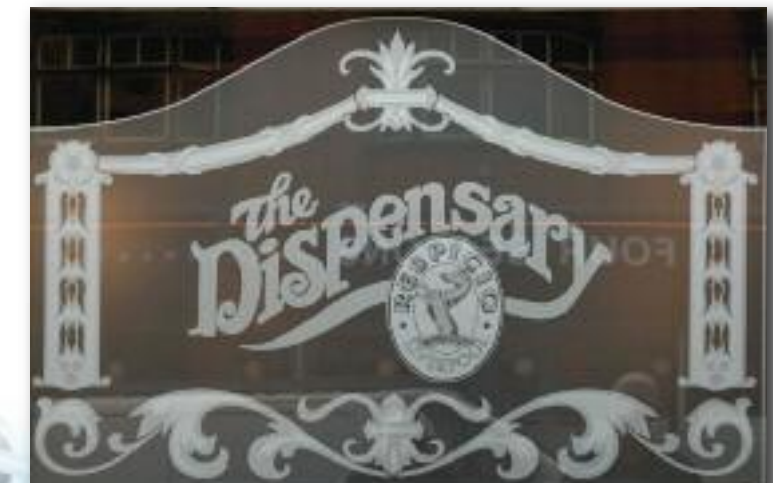
Fitting the two windows took about 3 hours and as you can see from the look on Dave's face he is more than pleased with the end result. The Dispensary customers can enjoy the new windows and a bit more privacy.

Secret Message

Eagle eyed customers may be able to spot a secret message that Dave had added to the large window panel that even the artist and designer Dennis didn't know about, see if you can spot it!

Pictures on the right are the films still on their backing paper prior to being fitted, close up detail of scroll work pattern and a proud Dave "Dizzy" Williams with his new Window.

For further information on Pub window repairs contact
@merseyale@liverpoolcamra.org.uk



The finished main window

Let Your Feet Take the Strain

Liverpool CAMRA Snowball Campaign Event Explores Town Pubs



Moorfields to Liverpool Central is a short train journey. The route taken by the Liverpool CAMRA



Hayley (right)
Our host at Ye Hole Ye Wall

Hackins Hey, one of Liverpool's historic lanes and the pub which lays claim to being the oldest in Liverpool. This pub was less familiar territory for many in the party. Comments included "I never knew it was here and I worked just around the corner". "My dad used to drink here but at that time women were not allowed in." Indeed Ye Hole Ye Wall was one of the last pubs to serve women and had to install a women's toilet. The group received a friendly welcome and

enjoyed a range of good beers, such that many indicated they would be revisiting the pub before long.

Onwards then, with a longer walk to the **Richmond** on Richmond Street, which is handy for Queens Square and the Playhouse. Again this was a pub which several in the party were unfamiliar with, but again found it to be welcoming and an interesting discovery.

Final stop was the **Globe** on Cases Street. The pub where it all began



Snowball event in November took rather longer. The latest in the 'Bringing New People to Real Ale Snowball Campaign Events' saw a group of twenty five women exploring pubs which were less familiar to them en route from Moorfields to Central.

The starting point was the **Lion Tavern**, Moorfields, where a fine choice of beers awaited along with a fascinating talk by the licensee Sean on the history and architecture of one of Liverpool's historic pubs with an unspoilt interior. There was much interest in the explanation of how Liverpool pubs came to have a distinctive design with the Lion being a classic example.

Next stop was just around the corner at **Ye Hole in Ye Wall** on



with Merseyside CAMRA's inaugural meeting back in January 1974 – see the brass plaques in the back room. Here the well chosen beers were served by **Kitty McNicholas, winner of Liverpool CAMRA's Barperson of the Year Award 2014.**



Throughout the evening the conversation was wide ranging and lively helping to make new friends and renew already established



contacts. Consensus was that the event had been an enjoyable introduction to some different Liverpool pubs which the group had been less aware of and which they looked forward to visiting again.

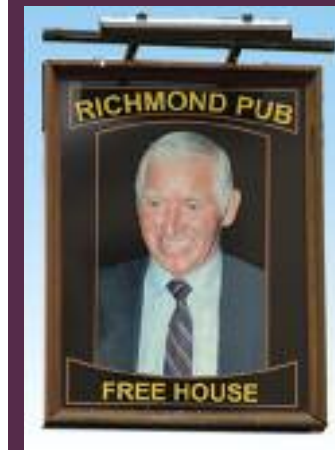
Then it was a case of Letting the Train or Bus take the strain as people headed home.

Helen McCall

The Richmond



The Richmond Hotel is undoubtedly part of the city of Liverpool's rich pub history. This former Bass house now serves a variety of real ales under the watchful eye of Andy Rawlinson whose attention to details hasn't gone unnoticed by the local CAMRA Branch who honoured him with a richly deserved award.



Upstairs in what used to be a hotel is now a four-bedroom living area that sleeps up to ten people. Just what you need for a match day! In earlier times the Richmond was a happy local for the legendary Paddy Golden, the D-day veteran whose photograph has decorated the pub's sign since its most recent refurbishment. Unusually for the city centre there is a large outdoor seating area on the pedestrianised street, making for a relaxing break from the busy streets.

Once inside and sampling the fine real ales, I was distracted by the amazing array of whiskies on offer in such a small bar. At the time I visited, Andy was busy organizing a tutored tasting of some of them. The Johnny Walker range was particularly impressive. Andy Rawlinson and the pub's owner, Gavin Heard, who also oversees the **Victoria Cross**, have become increasingly involved with CAMRA and the Richmond has hosted numerous campaigning events and will doubtless do so again. Six "Meet the Brewer" evenings have been held under Andy's supervision, five with local brewers and the next is due shortly. During Mild Month this year, Andy had on two milds brewed specially for the pub – a pale (in colour, not in taste) offering from Big Bog and a golden mild from George Wright, together with (rotating) dark milds throughout month.

Since his arrival, real ale has increased to six hand pumps often from local breweries (The Richmond is LocAle accredited) plus a couple of 'household name' beers (his phrase) such as Bass and London Pride as these are favourites with longer-term regulars.

Anyone on a cross-town crawl from Lime Street station to the Dale Street area (see Let Your Feet Take the Strain page 30) couldn't do better than stop off at this gem of a pub for some mid-course refreshment. Just don't get too distracted by the spirits; the ones behind the bar, I mean and not the local spirit on the pub sign who's probably watching from above and saying "cheers, keep the old place going as I'm watching you".

Geoff Edwards

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ManxAle

It is pleasing to report that the Isle of Man continues to see strong investment in the pub estate, both from the free house and managed house businesses, which is a very welcome sign in challenging times. Importantly for those on Island there remains a robust diversity in the types and styles of pub outlets, enabling the sector to cater for many types of clientele. We also report on the growth in sales of real cider on Island, but regrettably there is less favourable news on the local brewery front, with the anticipated demise of one of Island's breweries.

Diversity Reigns in 2015 Good Beer Guide IOM Entries



The 2015 CAMRA Good Beer Guide (GBG) lists 4,500 real ale pubs nationwide, including 28 on Island, all selected for the quality of their real ale. This focus on beer quality is the unique selling point of the GBG as it is the only book which guides you nationwide to pubs selling the best quality real ale, irrespective of the size of the beer range or the style of the pub. In contrast the CAMRA Pub of The Year Competition assesses additional factors such as clientele mix, pub atmosphere, facilities, customer service and value for money in addition to quality of the real ale. This GBG focus on real ale quality as the top criteria is reflected in the five new entries in the IOM section of the 2015 GBG. They are distinctly different styles of pub which cater for a wide range of clientele.

New Entry - Sir Norman's Bar at the Sefton Hotel, Central Promenade, Douglas

Real ale has now been stocked here for some years, with several beers being served, typically well-known names. On a recent occasion Marstons Pedigree, Sharps Doombar and Okells bitter were available. The bar is named after



actor Sir Norman Wisdom, who resided on Island for a number of years. Situated close to the Island's superb historic Gaiety theatre which is widely regarded as the best example of a Frank Matcham designed theatre, (take the Saturday morning theatre tour), Sir Norman's is popular with theatre goers, passers by and frequently the stage performers. Service is very much top end, and the walls of the bar feature a fascinating array of promotional posters from past theatre productions and events, with many famous performers. Despite the peaceful and up-market ambience, the bar is in no way exclusive, both price wise and in clientele. Discreetly positioned TV screens allow those interested in the sport to keep an eye on events. Sir Norman's, as is the case with all Good Beer Guide establishments, is fully open for access to non-residents without charge.

New Entry - The Railway Hotel, Quayside, Douglas

Also in Douglas, but at the inner end of the harbour, is The Railway Hotel. Having undergone several refurbishments over the years, it now sports a very modern feel,



appealing to mixed age ranges. The contrast to Sir Norman's could not be greater. The pub, as well as having screens for the sport and a pools games area, also regularly features bands at the weekend and



hosts a Blues night every third Wednesday of the month. It stocks a large selection of bourbon whiskeys in addition to lagers and real ale. This Heron and Brearley pub can become very lively, particularly at weekends. There is



spacious seating in the raised area to the front with views across the harbour which can also be enjoyed from the outside seating area. A sign post indicates walking times to other Heron and Brearley pubs around the Quayside. The Railway is an ideal meeting point opposite the Steam Railway



OKELL'S. PURE PERFECTION.



Douglas Station or before taking a leisurely wander down the quayside, courtesy of the instructions on the sign! **Okells MPA and Okells Bitter** were stocked during a recent visit.

New Entry - The Baltic, Foxdale

Moving six or seven miles from Douglas to Foxdale, here we find the Baltic, one of the most traditional community pubs on the Island, serving real ale. For many years Foxdale was a real ale desert, but a couple of years ago the licensee of this free house introduced a real ale and now stocks two cask ales, usually from the **Okells** range. The pub tends to



open late afternoon during the weekdays, with longer hours at weekend, and features a welcoming fire in winter months. An ideal venue to get away from the hubbub of Douglas and enjoy a relaxed pint and perhaps watch the sport on TV in a friendly setting. The pub was built for workers at the extensive but now defunct local Foxdale mines and features paintings of the former Foxdale Railway station and photographs of the mine workers of yesteryear. **Buses 8, 4.**

The Railway Station Port St Mary

South to Port St Mary, The Railway Station Hotel adjacent to the Steam Railway platform has entered the Guide. After reopening just a couple of years ago, The Railway Station goes from strength to strength, featuring several ales served in two separate bars, as well as accommodation. The restaurant



area was fully refurbished in late September, featuring two dining areas segregated by a real fire, providing a cosy and very stylish dining format. Details can be viewed on the pub's website.

Four ales are usually stocked, including **Okells Bitter, Okells MPA and Bushys bitter and Old Bushy Tail**. **Bushy's Old Bushy Tail** often predominates in this part of the Island, although Okells Bitter is also regularly found and retains its position of being the Island's most popular cask ale. This is despite the hugely increased competition as the Island market opened up in recent years to guest ales from Across.

Whilst being in a rural setting, the pub is only a ten minute walk from either **Port Erin**, or **Port St Mary** and is immediately adjacent to **Port St Mary Steam Railway Station**. **Bus 2 stops outside.**

This area of the Island is now very well served by Good Beer Guide pubs. In Port St Mary village **The Albert** overlooking the harbour is a long standing GBG entry renowned for its consistent beer quality (**Buses 1, 2 stop outside**), whilst **The Shore** in Gansley with panoramic views across the bay, (**Bus 2 stops outside**), has returned to the Good Beer Guide this year.

The Mitre Harbour Bar Parliament Street Ramsey

The fifth new entry this year is The Mitre in Ramsey, once again completely different to the aforementioned four. Here we have a large older town centre building, tastefully modernised and revitalised in recent years. Much effort has been needed here and has been applied successfully in what has clearly been a large project. There is an excellent quality real ale offering, consisting normally of four brews usually from the Island's main three brewers, **Okells, Bushys and Hooded Ram**. The bar is upstairs thereby offering wide views over Ramsey harbour, with entrances



both on Parliament Street and from the Quayside. The bar also serves excellent quality food which is popular with locals and tourists alike.

In summary, these five new entrants represent the superb mix of pubs now offering cask, across all types of venue and clientele mix. A further twenty three pubs from the island feature in the 2015 GBG, with a large photograph this year of **The Creek, Peel**, an award winning pub hugely popular both with diners and real ale drinkers.





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Campaigning Success for IOM CAMRA at Isle of Man Food and Drink Festival.



The Isle of Man Food and Drink Festival was once again held at the Villa Marina. CAMRA Isle of Man again staffed and ran a beer

tent, showcasing the Island's brews and providing refreshment for the crowds. For those readers in the U.K. there is still a very strong sense of community spirit and cooperation in the UK off



Islands, and this also manifests itself in the brewing industry on the Isle of Man. Although the Food Festival was not a CAMRA event, the CAMRA IOM Branch felt it was important to support it and to help showcase the Island's real ales as a campaigning aim. This year Okells, Hooded Ram, and Bushys beers were all

available in the tent along with ciders from the Manx Cider Company. The cooperation between the brewers, cider makers and CAMRA was evident throughout the event.



A range of literature and samples of hops and various types of malt were on display in the tent, illustrating to the public how the different beer flavours and styles are produced. CAMRA IOM has taken the decision to support this event wholeheartedly in recent years, and it also gives CAMRA access to a section of the public that do not always come across real ales or visit pubs. The Festival is an opportunity to show the range of tastes and different styles of real ale that are available. As such the event proved once again to be a very good campaigning tool both for the industry and CAMRA.



Island Cider Sales and Availability on the Rise.

With the advent of the Manx Cider Company (see MerseyAle Autumn 2014) and successful sales at the recent beer festivals, cider sales and demand are on the rise on Island. CAMRA Isle of Man now has its own cider representative, Kevin Garrad, who hails from traditional cider territory in the South West of England, and below Kevin gives his first MerseyAle IOM Cider Report.

Having only volunteered earlier this year to the post of Branch Cider

Officer, I have had a surprisingly large amount of work to do. The Isle of Man is not known as a hotbed of cider drinking - in fact when I arrived on Island 25 years ago there was only one pub selling real cider! (the White house Peel)

Well after exhaustive research (!!), I now have a list of 14 Island pubs that sell real cider - better than 15% of the pubs on Island. However, there are still some cider 'not spots' out there, with nothing reported at present from Castletown or Ramsey - but I'll keep plugging away and researching!

Heron & Brearley, the main pub operator on the Island, seem to

have embraced the concept of real cider, and now stock different brands, and styles, in a fair few of their pubs. Ciders from Westons seem to dominate, with Gwent-y-Ddraig also showing, but the big success is the Island's own Manx Cider Company, in operation for just one year, and already stocked at five venues. From a cider perspective, on a recent trip, the Queen of Cider Pubs has to be The Bay Hotel at Port Erin, with five real ciders and a perry available at time of visit! Marvellous!!

Kevin Garrad
CAMRA IOM Cider Officer

ISLE OF MAN CAMRA



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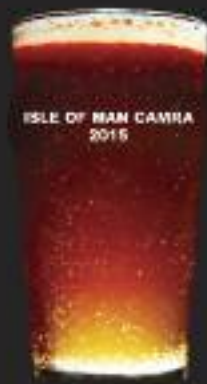
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Festival Organiser: Bill Smith
bill@iombeerfestival.com

Staffing Officer: Julie Jones
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ManxAle Contd

Jak's Bar. Will New Lager Wall Speed Up Real Ale Service?

Jak's Bar, a large open plan bar on Loch Promenade Douglas, now also stocks real ale in a basement bar which serves as a separate sports bar with TV for the sport and seating booths ideal for groups. The basement bar is available for hire. Okells Bitter and Bushys bitter were stocked at time of visit



on a small main bar. However, in keeping with this modern and innovative outlet, lagers are now served via a 'beer wall' which has been installed in recent months, where the customers serve themselves, having bought tokens



for use over the counter earlier. Any unused tokens can be refunded at the end of the evening.



Whilst only available for the lagers, this set up is proving popular with customers, and for the real ale fan reduces queuing when requiring a top up - so everyone wins, including the management and bar staff who are as a result less harassed! Who said lager wasn't good for cask - it is at Jak's!

In a further development, throughout October Jak's was offering cask ale at £2 a pint in an Oktoberfest promotion. Whilst common for the UK, such promotions are still very rare on Island, and once again Jak's is leading from the front in promotion and innovation, as it has done for many years.

Hop Garden is now The Forge.

The former Hop Garden pub and restaurant on the main road at Santon in front of Bushys brewery, had been closed for an extended period but reopened in late summer as The Forge. As previously the format is more food orientated, but the owners insist that those wanting to call in just for drinks are more than welcome.



Sadly no real ale is available at present, but Bushys bottled beers, along with several other specialist

bottled beers, are available. The Forge is open noon to 10pm Thursday to Monday. The menu is extensive and partly based on a feasting concept of dining rather than a traditional format. Long term plans are on the cards for accommodation. The Forge can cater for functions of up to 120, with 180 in the marquee area. The pleasant outdoor seating areas remain. MerseyAle wishes the venture well.

The Plough Ramsey

There was alarm late August when The Plough, Parliament Street, Ramsey was found to be closed during the motorbike Grand Prix, and remained closed late



September. However it is a pleasure to report that this last remaining Isle of Man traditional high street pub and Good Beer Guide entry, has reopened. Refurbishment has been well under way, but due to the age of the building, much more work was required than initially thought. Having had a conducted tour a week before opening, it was clear to see that a sympathetic refurbishment had been undertaken, giving The Plough a thoroughly modern makeover but still retaining traditional fires and two separate rooms with a combination of wooden and tiled flooring. The opportunity to change the beer lines and separate the pythons carrying the beers up from the cellar has been taken, enabling the use of different temperatures for lagers and real ales.



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ManxAle Contd



CAMRA Award for the Sidings Castletown,

The Branch presented the Sidings with the award for Runner Up in the CAMRA IOM Pub of the Year competition. Many congratulations to this long term supporter of cask beers, and recent outright winner of the Isle of Man Pub of the Year Award.

Heron and Brearley Refurbishments

The **Rosemount**, Woodbourne Road, Douglas has undergone a refurbishment to the back room areas, enhancing it as a premier pool venue. **The Highwayman**, Derby Road, on the outskirts of

Peel is also scheduled for works, and the **Cat with No Tail** in outer Douglas has undergone external works.

This rounds off significant investment across Island from both managed and free house companies, thereby future proofing their businesses as drinking patterns and dining habits continue to change over time.

Doghouse Disappears

Sadly it appears Doghouse brewery is no longer in production, with an increasing number of stalwart landlords reporting they are unable to obtain the beers. The large



banners advertising Doghouse across Island have mostly been replaced by similar ones for other local breweries, notably Bushys and Hooded Ram.

St Nick's Night

As Christmas approaches, Heron & Brearley have held there much anticipated **St Nick's** launch night in **The British** on Douglas North Quay - the St Nick being a dark Christmas ale at 4.5%. Generally dry hopped, two American hops have been used this year, both different to last year. This event, now firmly established in the Island calendar, signals that the true run up to Christmas on Island is about to begin - and it's perhaps a timely reminder for the imbiber to consider leaving the pub for a few moments in pursuit of presents, suitably fortified by the St Nick, of course, for good luck.

And a 2015 Resolution - CAMRA IOM Beer Festival

Don't forget that the 2015 CAMRA IOM Beer Festival is at the Villa Marina Douglas Thursday 9th to Saturday 11th April 2015 - see advert page 38

Dave Halliwell
MerseyAle IOM Correspondent

A Campaign of Two Halves

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MerseyAlePubnews contd

East Liverpool Pubs continued from page 27

The Hunting Lodge in the centre of West Derby village continues to sell **Doombar**.



The Sefton has also been refurbished and no longer has the separate bar area. Like most Greene King pubs guest ales from local breweries can now be stocked. **George Wright Long Boat** was available on my visit.

Along Leyfield Road is the **Royal Standard**, another John Barras pub. It was selling the special November beer from **Clark's, Mush Dash**.

The Crown, opposite, no longer stocks any real ale.

Moving around Knotty Ash, the **Wheatsheaf** on East Prescot Road continues not to use its hand pumps. This is a pity, as this classic pub, still with windows put in by the nearby **Joseph Jones Brewery**, would be a nice place to sup real beer. Nearby, the furniture store that had taken over the former Knotty Ash pub is no longer trading. What chance of it becoming a pub again?

Old Swan Beer Desert.
The Navigator, the Wetherspoon



outlet in Old Swan, is now the only place in the district serving real ale.

The Black Horse and the **Masons Arms** are the only Greene King pubs I know that do not serve cask beer. **The Old Swan** has also had its hand pumps removed and the Red House has closed. **The Albany** is another pub that has lost its real ale. Locals wanting to drink cask beer probably take one of the dozens of buses along Prescot Road into town.

Crosby Pubs

The lease is available at the **Crosby** on Liverpool Road. It would be good if a new licensee could stock more real ales, to make a stop on the walk from **Stamps** to the **Liverpool Pigeon**.

Lydiate

The Scotch Piper, the oldest pub in Lancashire, was featured in MerseyAle Autumn 2014, but was badly damaged when three men broke in to the pub on 24th October to steal the safe and caused a major flood of water. A message written on a table read: "Sorry tried to turn water off could not find it. Hope you fix pub". Manager Phil Moran said there was "an element of remorse" to the note, but the flood had created "carnage". "They took the safe and everything they could get their hands on but left a message saying sorry about the



water," he said. "I think one of them had a connection with the pub." Mr Moran, who has managed the pub with his business partner Julie Pringle since March, said the thieves were caught on CCTV breaking in within minutes of him locking up.

The good news is that the water damage has been repaired and the historic pub, which is one of just 200 nationwide listed in CAMRA's National Inventory of Unspoilt Interiors, is trading again. The 300 Liverpool to Southport bus stops outside. Take a ride up to support Phil and Julie.

Whoop Whoop! Meanwhile in Manchester – reports of a forthcoming **Manchester Tap** at Piccadilly Station. Reports are circulating that the company that operates the **York** and **Euston Tap**



pubs with their large arrays of real ales, is preparing to open a new branch in Manchester on the approach road to Piccadilly Station in the former Suede and Leather shop. This would be very good news for rail passengers who are currently denied any real ale in the station itself. Suggestions had been made that the Dome buffet at Manchester Victoria would be an ideal venue for a station Tap bar, with its stained glass dome and tiling providing a setting to rival the York Tap interior, especially as Victoria is undergoing an extensive refurbishment. However it appears Piccadilly has been chosen. To mark the Liverpool to Manchester electrification opening in 2015 would it be too much to ask that Liverpool be considered for a station Tap as well?

Pub News by Tony Williams with additional material from John Armstrong

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MerseyAleBrewerynews

Two New Local Breweries – one in Ellesmere Port and one in Formby

Cheshire Brew Brothers

Chris Campion and Alistair Rich have launched a new brewery based in Ellesmere Port but trading around the Chester area, called Cheshire Brew Brothers. During a



Meet the Brewer Night at the **Dee Hotel** West Kirby they spoke to MerseyAle about how the business had come about and their aims for the future.

In Bruges

The idea for setting up a commercial brewery was hatched in the **Garre bar** in Bruges during a short holiday break. The surroundings of the historic Garre in the best preserved example in Europe of a medieval guild town located in Belgium the country where beer is a national art form, set Chris and Alistair thinking about scaling up their experience of home brewing into the big scale of commercial brewing. With the wheels in motion they set about a career change and putting together the business plan.

In Ellesmere Port

The brewery is located in an industrial unit of one thousand square feet in Ellesmere Port, close to Cheshire Oaks Retail Park. The 8 barrel plant produces 2,300 pints per brew. The initial aim was to produce four core beers with not too high an abv and with a good hoppy flavour and a full mouth feel. This was a process of trial and

error and quite stressful in reaching the desired end products of consistency and only finally releasing a beer of which the brewers felt proud to have on sale. The outcome was a Golden, a Dark, an Amber and a Tawny beer which form the basis of the regular beer range.

In Chester

The beers began with working names to test the market. Feedback from sales and customers soon showed that the name 'Chester' helped attract attention to the beers. Consequently the working names were soon replaced with Chester themed names including **Chester Gold, Dark Roodee** (name



of the Chester Racecourse), **Earls Eye Amber** (name of the bend in the River Dee), **King's Tower Tawny** (name of the Tower used by King Charles in the Civil War).

In Beer Champions

A special feature of the Brew Brothers business is concept of Beer Champions Training for bar staff serving the beer. Staff are invited to a brewery visit and a visual presentation about how the beer is brewed and how the beers differ in flavour. This is intended to enable the bar staff to give better advice and information to customers about the Cheshire Brew Brothers beers and to understand real ale more generally.

In Brew Brothers

Why the name Brew Brothers when they were not brothers? The answer is the emphasis on teamwork in developing the business and working closely together throughout – as in band of brothers.

Not a bad principle on which to base a brewing business. Watch out for their beers in Cheshire, the Wirral and in some pubs around Liverpool.

Parker Brewery Formby

The Parker Brewery began operations earlier this year and has been building up production and beer range. Having started with a 25 litre kit



to installing an 800 litre stainless steel brewery plant it is some step up. Initial brews appeared in bottles and were part of a development and market testing process. They include



Barbarian Bitter 4.2%, Centurion Citrale 3.9% and Dark Spartan Stout 5%. The beers have been on sale in local beer shops including, the **Crosby Beer Shop, Inn Beer** Southport, **Aughton Wines** Formby and the **Barrel House** Birkdale.

More on the Parker Brewery in a future edition of MerseyAle.

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*13 of for CAMRA members (proof required)

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Memories of CAMRA in the 70s

Liverpool CAMRA 40th Anniversary

Recently I was privileged to be invited by Liverpool and Districts CAMRA member to take part in the 40th birthday party for CAMRA Merseyside, and here are my thoughts and memories.

I recall 1974 well. When the first branch of the fledgling Campaign for Real Ale was founded in January of that year, I was a sixth-former at the famous Liverpool Collegiate School, and therefore the then licensee of the Globe would have been horrified to see a 17-year-old attending the inaugural CAMRA meeting, as I was not 18 until October that year. Therefore sadly I was not a founder member. What I do remember distinctly about that year is that it was a year of two General Elections, the latter falling just three days before my eighteenth birthday, and therefore I missed out on that as well. The country was generally in a bit of a mess, which is all the more reason why the brewing industry needed CAMRA.

The CAMRA Good Beer Guide 1977

Moving on a few years, Queen Elizabeth II was celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1977, and the week of the celebrations my parents took my two younger sisters and I on a family holiday to Pwllheli. This developed into a week that would give me a

hobby for life: on a visit to Pwllheli market that summer, I was browsing some second hand books on a book stall when I came across a book which I seem to recall cost me sixty pence: what could you buy for that in 1977, maybe one or possibly two pints. Anyway, I bought the book, and it was a copy of the 1976 Good Beer Guide.

Pub Hunting in Liverpool

So my new hobby began, trying the pubs and the beer listed in the pubs in Liverpool, being

The Old Higsonian Tradition



weaned off lager at the relatively young age of 21 by trying the Higson's bitter and mild in the Halton Castle in West Derby, a regular haunt due to living in Anfield and taking part in school games and playing football for the Collegiate at Holly Lodge girls school.

As the new hobby of drinking real ale began, I look at the inside back cover of that 1976 GBG which depicted a little man trying to be palmed off with a pint of keg beer, accompanying a feature on CAMRA and its aims. I duly read the advice, sent off my £2.00

annual membership in 1977 and have been a member ever since, converting to Life Membership at the national AGM in Southport in 2004.

Around this time, as a single man in my twenties, I converted many of my friends to drinking real ale. Our weekends, especially Saturday nights, involved pub crawls across Merseyside and West Lancashire. A Merseytravel Saveaway ticket (just £1.00 at that time) was all that was needed, and the world of real ale was our oyster. However, an integral part of our explorations was some additional local knowledge, and that was provided by the good gentlemen and ladies who produced the essential information provided in Mersey Drinker, which I also subscribed to.

So I was indebted to people like **Ian Macmillan** and the late



Tony Wilson (later Molyneux) who put Mersey Drinker together, and I was delighted to hear people like Ian speak in the Globe on 17th January 2014, giving me the chance to put a face to a well known name.



Tony Molyneux

The Founding Members

Later on I started attending the odd CAMRA meeting. I remember my first-ever meeting, which was at the Thwaites pub (a rarity in Liverpool) the **St. Hilda** on Walton Road. When I asked a young lady if I was in the right place for the CAMRA meeting, she confirmed that I was, and not only that she asked if she could get me a pint. That young woman was none other than **Jean Pownceby**, and I am pleased to say that Jean is still an active CAMRA member and one of the original founder members of CAMRA Merseyside, and probably one of the main reasons I am still an active CAMRA member myself. It was really interesting to me listening to the speeches of the men who spoke at the 40th anniversary party at the Globe, the pub where it all began. Little did I know that **Bob Thurlow** was the first Chairman, because I have subsequently played matches against Bob in the

Merseyside Quiz League, an institution which goes even further back than CAMRA to 1959 – see MerseyAle summer 2014. After moving from Liverpool to Southport in 1989, I played for the then Upsteps team in the Southport & Formby Quiz League against Bob's Mersey Bowmen from South Liverpool. It just shows that great minds think alike! I was originally a player for the White Star in the 1980s, which was my introduction to the MQL and the best pint of Bass in Liverpool. Believe me. It was not a coincidence that I played for a team in a real ale pub!

Southport CAMRA

Although I did not really become that active with CAMRA Merseyside in the 1980s, it was when my job with the Trustee Savings Bank took me to Southport, where I moved when I got married in 1989, that I really got involved. From 1990 I became Membership Secretary for CAMRA Southport &



White Star 1970's

District (now Southport & West Lancs Branch), moving up to Secretary, a post I held for ten years, then becoming Chairman for several years. I have also been involved in organising every Southport Beer Festival since its inception in 2000 and have written articles in every issue of our Ale & Hearty CAMRA newsletter since its very first issue in May 1995. Tribute.



I will finish by paying my own tribute to those fine men (and woman) who started it all in January 1974. It was so interesting to hear how it all started while I was still doing my homework as a Collegiate schoolboy, and especially interesting to hear what the real ale scene was like in 1974 when there was basically a choice in Liverpool between Higson's, Tetley's, Walker's and Greenall Whitley beers (mainly in the south of the city).

I sincerely hope that I am around to celebrate the 50th anniversary of CAMRA in Liverpool, and wish CAMRA continued success for the future as we meet new challenges in the 21st century.

David Williams
CAMRA Southport & West Lancs.

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Good Beer Guide 2015 Liverpool Launch

The Liverpool Launch for the 2015 Good Beer Guide was held at the Fly in the Loaf Hardman Street. Licensees of the pubs listed in the Liverpool section of the Guide were invited to the event.

Forty Five Merseyside and Cheshire Breweries Featured in the 2015 Good Beer Guide

- 6 new Merseyside and Cheshire breweries listed
- 44 new Merseyside and Cheshire pubs featured in this year's Good Beer Guide
- The Freshfield in Formby named as one of the UK's 'Top 16' pubs according to CAMRA.

The 2015 Good Beer Guide features 6 new breweries and 44 new pub entries for the Merseyside and Cheshire region.

The annual guide also gives details of the various beers brewed in the region, such as Redball IPA by Redball, London Porter by Britman and Dam Strong Ale by Lymm. The book's Editor Roger Protz says, "It's fantastic to see a continued growth in local brewing which has been encouraged by an increased interest in local ales. The overall brewery number has

been heavily contributed to by small breweries which have been popping up across the country. It's welcome news for ale lovers as more breweries means more choice."

Merseyside and Cheshire Pub Named as one of Top 16 in UK

As well as listing new and existing breweries in the area, the UK's top pubs are also listed in the guide, with the Freshfield in Formby named as one of 16 finalists in the Campaign for Real Ale's (CAMRA) National Pub of the Year competition. Described in the beer guide as "A great example of community local where the emphasis is on beer quality. A Greene King pub, it offers up to 14 ales including 10 guests. The pub also has a growing reputation for good food served in the restaurant. Following a successful CAMRA-led campaign, the stone floored area has been retained. Families are welcome and an enlightened management with engaging staff help to ensure a welcoming experience."

The pub was judged against numerous other local branch winners and was deemed to be the best in the region overall, with a perfect mix of the essential characteristics which make a great pub: Atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, value for money, customer mix, but most importantly – quality real ale.

In total the Merseyside and Cheshire region had 142 pubs listed in the guide.

"The Good Beer Guide 2015 recommends the best pubs in Britain for real ale drinkers. The guide is compiled through independent judgement and recommendations, meaning pubs are chosen on merit alone rather than being charged for an entry, as is the case with many other guides. If you have a passion for ale and want to know the best places to find it, then this book can be an invaluable resource for you."

Roger added.

The pub guide is broken down by region and also town, which makes it easy to find the best pubs in your area or another area of the country you might want to visit.

Buy the GBG from CAMRA Publications or from good bookshops.



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New Merseyside and Cheshire Breweries which Feature in the Good Beer Guide 2015:

BREWERY NAME	TOWN/CITY	REGION
Parker	Formby	Merseyside
2 & Nine	Warrington	Cheshire
Britman	Burton	Cheshire
Cheshire Brew Brothers	Ellesmere Port	Cheshire
Lymm	Lymm	Cheshire
Redball	Chester	Cheshire

Figures for GBG Pubs and Breweries in Merseyside and Cheshire

Region	2015 Pubs	New Pub Entries	2015 Breweries	New Breweries
Cheshire	71	19	32	5
Merseyside	71	25	13	1
Total:	142	44	45	6

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MerseyAlePubChainnews

JD Wetherspoon is 927 up

In December 2014 JD Wetherspoon will open their 927th pub to mark their 35 years of operation.



The first pub was opened by Tim Martin (now Chairman of JD Wetherspoon) in Muswell Hill London in 1979.

The 100 mark was reached in December 1994 with the opening of the Moon Under Water in Watford, the town which is now the location of the Wetherspoon Head Office.

In December 1996 the first outlet in Scotland opened, the Counting House in Glasgow.

In September 1998 Wetherspoon moved into the hotel business, opening the Shrewsbury Hotel in the town of that name. There are now 31 Wetherspoon hotels

In August 2000 the first Northern Ireland outlet opened, the Spinning Mill in Ballymena

In 2014 the first outlet in the Republic of Ireland, the Three Tun Tavern, opened at Blackrock near Dublin.

Greene King Takes Over Spirit Group

Greene King has taken over the Spirit Group Pub Company in a deal that values Spirit at £774 million. The takeover creates a group with more than 3,000 pubs and restaurants employing 40,000 staff, controlling one fifth of the UK pub market. Prior to the takeover Greene King had 1,900 pubs and restaurants including the Hungry

Horse and Loch Fyne chains. Spirit was created from a spin off from Punch Taverns and has 1,200 outlets including the John Barras pub chain and Flaming Grill pub restaurants.

The attraction of Spirit for Greene King is the number of outlets Spirit has in London and the South East where spending on eating out and drinking is strong.

Greene King to Appeal Against Project Sussex Court Decisions

Greene King is to take Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to the Court of Appeal to challenge two court judgements that the £21 million GK Project Sussex tax planning scheme is illegal. Project Sussex was featured in



MerseyAle Summer 2013 when MPs on the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee described it as "an illegitimate game to outwit the taxpayer" and as "a purely artificial attempt to create millions of pounds of tax relief out of thin air." Prem Sikka professor of Accounting at the University of Essex commented; "Hopefully people will show their anger and boycott the products of Greene King and Ernst and Young (the accountancy firm that devised the Project Sussex scheme)."

In a judgment handed down by the first-tier tax tribunal last summer, it was confirmed that Greene King knew "the true underlying purpose of the transactions (was) as a means, if it succeeded, of generating relief for the payments of interest made without corresponding liability to tax on the receipts".

Counsel for HMRC David Milne QC put it more starkly: Project Sussex was "a scheme for making

what would otherwise be taxable income vanish into thin air". He had told the tribunal that E&Y had proposed "transactions... structured in the curious way... in order to attempt to take advantage of a perceived loophole in the loan relationships legislation so as to achieve a tax mismatch within the Greene King group."

He suggested it was "in truth no more than a tax-saving device, one moreover in which E&Y was to share, by taking a percentage of the tax saved by its adoption." E&Y separately acted as auditor to Greene King.

It is expected that the Court of Appeal will give its ruling on the Greene King appeal before Christmas.

Greene King Hungry Horse Burger "Family friendly" pub chain

Hungry Horse with 220 pubs has been criticised for creating a burger containing nearly 100% of a woman's recommended daily calorie intake at 1,996 calories.

The Double Donut burger consists of two beef burgers topped with cheese, four bacon rashers and BBQ sauce, sandwiched between two glazed ring-doughnuts.

Critics called it irresponsible, dubbing it "a heart attack on a plate". Advertised with the tag line "So Wrong It's Right", the Double Donut burger contains 53g of saturated fat, well above the 20g daily allowance for women and 30g allowance for men. The amount of salt in it - 8.2g - is also more than the recommended daily amount for adults (6g).

Mel Wakeman, senior lecturer in Applied Physiology at Birmingham City University, said:

"To me, this is simply ludicrous and irresponsible. I am no killjoy but why is this sort of food available?"

Hungry Horse said it was catering for a variety of tastes.

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

Liverpool Branch Diary 2014

Liverpool Branch Annual General Meeting Wednesday 21st January 2015 8pm at Ship and Mitre, Dale Street, Higher Room upstairs. Please bring your CAMRA membership card in order to vote for election of new Committee.

December Events

Tues 2nd December – Seasonal Dark Beer LocAle tour – start Baltic Fleet 7pm, moving on to Abbey in Hanover Street, Richmond in Williamson Street, then Vernon Arms and Rigby's in Dale Street
Sat 6th December - Pub visit to Manchester City Centre, including Christmas market and 'This and That' Indian cafe. 10.22 am train from Lime Street
Sat 13th December - Afternoon pub crawl with visitors from St Helens branch. Meet Crown, Lime Street, 1pm

CAMRA Liverpool Coach Trips 2015

Saturday 10th January - Frodsham Beer Festival and then on to **Appleton Thorn Village Hall** previously voted CAMRA Club of the Year. Note the Later Departure from opposite Ship and Mitre Dale Street and Lower Cost - depart 10.30am return around 7.30pm - cost £8.00

7th February – Lancaster Pubs depart 10am – cost as below

14th March – York Pubs depart 10am – cost as below

Saturday Dates for 2015 - Destinations yet to be announced.

11th April; 9th May; 13th June; 11th July; 8th August; 5th September; 10th October; 14th November.

Coach Trips depart 10am from opposite Ship and Mitre Dale Street unless otherwise advised and return about 9pm. Check website for updates www.liverpoolcamra.org.uk

Cost is £12 for CAMRA Members or £15 for non members.

It pays to join CAMRA!

To book email social@liverpoolcamra.org.uk or phone Ian Macadam 07521 741 586

Regional CAMRA Meetings

These meetings are open to all CAMRA members and are held to bring together all the CAMRA Branches in the region to discuss campaign activity and national CAMRA issues. Dates for 2015.

Saturday February 28th host North Cheshire Branch

Saturday July 4th host St Helens Branch

Saturday September 26th host Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch

January 9th (2016) host Wirral Branch

Venues to be announced



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Ticket Price includes
Festival Glass and
Programme

Discount for card
carrying CAMRA
Members in Beer
Vouchers

ADMISSION BY ADVANCE TICKET ONLY

See www.liverpoolbeerfest.org



General ticket sale Saturday 13th December only
From 11am at Augustus John Pub

Peach Street Liverpool University Grounds off Brownlow Hill

Tickets Limited to 4 per person Over 18's only