

PINTS of VIEW

THE MAGAZINE FOR EDINBURGH & S.E. SCOTLAND

Issue 58

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

FREE

Winter 2011

We are the Champions

Winners at CAMRA's prestigious festivals, the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) in August and our Scottish Real Ale Festival (SRAF) in June, were:

Champion Best Bitter of Britain 2011 (GBBF) Houston Brewery's **Peter's Well**.

This 4.2% ABV pale ale has an aroma of freshly cut grass with warm floral hop notes. The taste is smooth yet dry and is refreshingly zesty. Owner and head brewer Carl Wengel said: "It's fantastic! There are over 800 breweries in the UK with tens of thousands of different ales and my wee micro in Houston brewed the Champion Best Bitter of Great Britain. I am so proud!" Not only that, but Peter's Well took

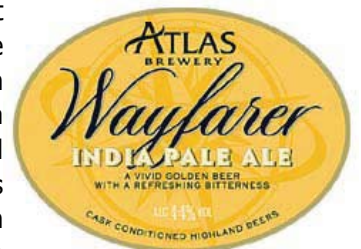
third place in the Champion Beer of Scotland competition. And to crown a tremendous hat trick of awards the Fox & Hounds pub adjoining the brewery is CAMRA's Scotland & Northern Ireland Pub of the Year 2011. (see page 4)

Champion Beer of Scotland 2011 (SRAF) Isle of Skye Brewery's



Cuillin Beast. At 7% ABV it's not for the faint-hearted, but sip it slowly and its fruitiness, sweetness and dry caramel will be prominent throughout. Angus said, "We're absolutely knocked out! As one of the earlier new Scottish brewers we've come close to winning on a number of occasions and couldn't be more delighted to win this year."

Speciality Beers Category (GBBF) Bronze Medal went to **Atlas Wayfarer** from Orkney Brewery. Norman Sinclair, managing director of Sinclair Breweries, said: "We're immensely proud to come away with a bronze medal for Wayfarer from what is a highly competitive event for brewers. To be one of only two Scottish breweries to win a medal at the festival is a bonus and proves smaller, quality driven breweries from north of the border are still holding their own against some of the bigger names in the business."



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Pints of View is read by 20,000 drinkers in Edinburgh, Lothians and the Borders

The Ed's bit

The summer weather hasn't been kind to us and let's hope that, as you read this, the winter is not as harsh as the previous two! The highlight of 2011 was undoubtedly the success of CAMRA's Scottish Real Ale Festival with a record attendance despite a new venue. Great also to see so many young people there; all despite a certain north east brewery having a go at us - again!

Our branch also saw the opening of the Scottish Borders Brewery and DemonBrew taking over the Gothenburg micro. The number of Scottish breweries is higher than at any other time and, whilst that is great news, it means that the smaller breweries do have to work harder to get their beers into pubs.

That brings me to the Beer Tie and CAMRA's campaign to force pubcos to slacken the stranglehold they have on their tenants. CAMRA's position has been strengthened by the Institute of Public Policy Research and the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee both of which have confirmed that pubcos are not doing enough to reform the tie. But will Westminster act on their findings and recommendations?

Wetherspoon's Tim Martin raises an interesting point when he calls for the abolition of VAT on food for pubs and restaurants to bring them into line with supermarkets. But as far as Scotland is concerned it is the rates bill that is possibly the greatest whammy that pubs have to endure. If this burden

was reduced then it could mean the difference between a pub teetering on the edge of closure or remaining open. I know you are doing your bit by enjoying a pint or two - keep up the good work!

So Wells & Young's have bought McEwan's and Younger's brands from Heineken! With McEwan's set to continue being brewed at Caley, what chance of seeing McEwan's 80/- and Younger's No 3 appearing in cask form? No 3 would be most welcome and Caley would brew a much better 80 Bob than latterly came out of Fountain Factory or Holyrood. However, it appears that W & Y intend to market the brands globally. Managing director Nigel McNally is also quoted as saying, "It's really about providing more choice for the drinker and bringing new drinkers to the great range of McEwan's and Younger's beers. I think we should be very open-minded about bringing different flavours of beers to McEwan's and Younger's beers. Within our beers we have banana bread beer, chocolate beer and a honey beer and they are all successful." Eh! "Wells", so much for focusing on the heritage of these classic brands! See Andrew Haswell's article on page 6

And finally, if you haven't already done so, why not treat yourself to a copy of CAMRA's 2012 Good Beer Guide - you deserve it.

Happy drinking in 2012 to all our readers, advertisers, contributors and deliverers.

Fred

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Pints of View is the magazine of the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.

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“I’ll have 2/3rds of a pint of IPA, please”

On October 1st a new Weights & Measures rule allowed publicans to sell draught ale in 2/3rds of a pint measure. In Australia the measure between a pint and a half pint is called a schooner. Actually it’s 15 fl oz (3/4 of a pint) as opposed to 13 1/3rd fl oz (2/3rd of a pint) and not to be confused with a sherry schooner. It’s fair to say therefore that in pubs adopting this measure, customers would ask for a schooner and be served in a suitable glass of that name.

It is not mandatory for licensees to provide this measure, so will there be a call for it? POV conducted a straw poll of both real ale drinkers and licensees and here is a selection of replies:

Customers:

“I don’t think I’ll take advantage of this. The choice between a half and a pint is enough for me but then I prefer weaker beers. Maybe for those who like 6% plus beers a “schooner” could be useful and it also gives brewers of strong beers the opportunity to produce branded glasses which are a suitable size for their beer.” (Paula Sharp)

“One third of a pint is already legal measure so the only change here is to make two thirds legal too. It makes it consistent but it’s not often that you go into a pub wanting one half plus one sixth of a pint which is what two thirds is. I don’t see it being used much.” (Ted Sharp)

“I thought we already had something similar - it’s called a half pint. I would have thought publicans had enough on their plates without introducing a third measure into their repertoire: or is it the government’s latest ploy to stop drunken revelry? Either way, they would have been better employed curbing the supermarket special offers, to misquote the 19th century gin houses ‘drunk for two pound: dead drunk for three pound: plus extra club points’ ” (Ron & Christine Farnish)

“Reasonable idea, especially in pubs with a range of real

beers. Would allow slightly more sampling of different beers. Need to watch that prices of 2/3 pint do not in any way get confused with those of a full pint.” (Roger Preece)

“A step in the right direction, but what would be really useful, especially for women, would be wide availability of 1/3 pint glasses. This would be particularly useful when trying out different beers in same pub.” (Kate Preece)

“I support the 1/3rd pint measure. This is great when trying stronger beers, or sampling a wide range of beers in an evening. However, I am concerned that adding a 2/3rd pint measure creates an un-necessary level of choice for the public. This could result in a stealth price increase if establishments move away from pint measures and offer 2/3rd measures for virtually the price of a pint.” (Jon Addinall)

Licensees:

“I’m all for it both as a real ale drinker and licensee. Sometimes I don’t want a full pint but then strangely I find a half pint disappearing too quickly. A schooner measure could be a good compromise. It would also be good for the higher strength ales. I’d definitely be interested in introducing schooners”. (Alan Cameron, The Tass, Edinburgh)

“This measure could well appeal to female drinkers, especially if an attractive glass/schooner was involved. Some of my customers who drink Innes & Gunn may well prefer it to the half pint measure currently used”. (Michelle Kelso, The Linton, East Linton)

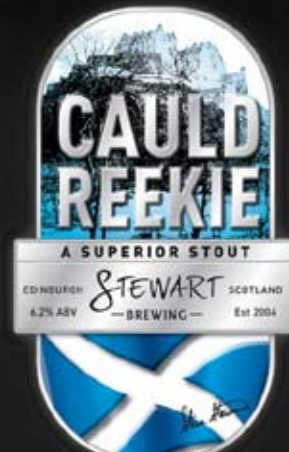
“Bad idea. I can’t see the need for it. We are already well served by the pint and half pint”. (Calvine McFarlane, Doctors, Edinburgh)

Ed - so there it is. A slight swing towards “against” but a small consensus suggesting that the measure might appeal to women drinkers. Time will tell.

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More winners

With **Cuillin Beast** taking top honour at CAMRA's Scottish Real Ale Festival, the runner up was **Cairngorm Black Gold** with Peter's Well taking third.



"Beauty and the Beast"
Pam, brewer and wife of Isle of Skye owner Angus MacRuary.

SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers) held its Scottish competition at the Festival and the overall winners were:

- Gold - **Jarl** (3.8%ABV), Fyne Ales
- Silver - **Scapa Special** (4.2%ABV), Highland Brewing Co
- Bronze - **Orkney IPA** (4.8%ABV), Highland Brewing Co.



At the Great British Beer Festival the Overall winners were: Champion Beer of Britain - **Mighty Oak** (3.7%ABV), Oscar Wilde Brewery Second - **Chocolate** (5.5% ABV), Marble Beers Third - **Shropshire Gold** (3.8% ABV), Salopian Brewing.

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CAMRA's Pub of the Year Awards

Winners of the Scottish Finals were;

- 1st Fox & Hounds, Home of the Houston Brewing company.
- 2nd Albert Tavern, Freuchie
- 3rd Braeval Hotel, Nairn

POV has it on good authority that on his Scottish tour, Neil Diamond visited the Fox & Hounds and enjoyed drinking Peter's Well. Now that's a heck of a testimony!

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The Interview

CATHERINE MAXWELL STUART
TRAQUAIR HOUSE BREWERY,
INNERLEITHEN

POV: Tell us about the history of Traquair House Brewery.

CMS: The brewery at Traquair dates back to the 1700's when it was converted from a former stables and coach house. Brewing before this time took place in the kitchens of the house. The brewery was certainly in use until the early 1800's when duty taxes were imposed and the advent of commercial breweries made the small domestic breweries uneconomic. We don't know exactly what date brewing stopped but what is remarkable is that the brew house and tun room were not dismantled but just left as the brewery gradually turned into the family junk rooms. This was to such an extent that even the old copper was forgotten about (bought in 1738) and it was no longer even known as the brew house. It was not until my father started looking into all the old outbuildings in the 1960's that he discovered all the original equipment and vessels hidden under large piles of furniture and old champagne bottles. With a background in distilling he decided to find out if it were still possible to brew here. With the help of Sandy Hunter, then owner of Belhaven Brewery in Dunbar, they came up with a recipe for a traditional Scottish ale or wee heavy and the first bottles of Traquair House Ale were produced in 1965.

POV: When your father died, it would have been an easy option to close the brewery. What inspired you not only to keep it open but to manage it yourself?

CMS: I had grown up enjoying the brewery and helping my father out from time to time. My pony was kept in the stable next door so I was around the brewery a lot and it was great fun to be allowed to stay up late waiting for the beer to cool and the Customs man to arrive. So when my father died I very much wanted to carry on with the brewery, particularly as it meant so much to him and by this time was also growing in popularity. The only problem was our very limited capacity. We had one full time brewer, Ian Cameron, assisted by Frank Smith who worked part time in the grounds so I very much wanted to see whether we could make the whole thing work as a commercial enterprise that would stand alone.

POV: How much influence do you have on the beers that you brew or do you leave it all to your brewers?

CMS: The beers are all Scottish traditional ales and we aim to keep our beers in that category. I often come up with the ideas and Ian and Frank work on the exact recipe.

The Jacobite Ale in 1995 came about to commemorate the 250th anniversary and was from recipes we found in the archives that used coriander. We have also produced various commemorative ales such as the 1000th brew, Stuart Ale and the 900th Birthday Brew which are around 9 - 10%ABV and follow a tradition my father started.

POV: Tell us about your beers, both bottled and those that go to cask.

CMS: These are the tasting notes:

TRAQUAIR HOUSE ALE ABV 7.2%

The original House Ale first brewed in 1965 and now sold all over the world. A truly authentic Scottish Ale is a rich dark tour de force and fermented in the old oak tuns.

Described as: "Serious Alcohol and fruity malt on the nose, and delicious plum pie and vanilla flavours with a little oak amontillado sherry flavour." Andrea Gillies, World Beer Guide.

TRAQUAIR JACOBITE ALE ABV 8%

Brewed to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Jacobite rebellion the ale proved so popular it has become a permanent addition to the range. Based on an eighteenth century recipe the ale is spiced with coriander which gives a fresh aftertaste. "A rich warm biscuity aroma balanced by hops and a herbal note from the coriander - a bitter sweet finish with hints of chocolate, winy fruit and coriander." Roger Protz

TRAQUAIR BEAR ALE ABV 5%

Traquair's original draught ale was first bottled in 1993 and has proved

a popular slightly lighter addition to the range. A rich amber coloured ale with hints of oakiness and strong malty flavours. "Rich malty nose and a full malty palate, attractive fruity hops appearing on the finish. A big well flavoured ale from a tiny brewery." Ratebeer.com

STUART ALE ABV 4.5%

Brewed in the summer season only. Our lightest ale in the range and extremely drinkable bearing the trademark Traquair flavours with a lovely hoppy finish.

POV: Do you actually enjoy beer? If so, do you have a favourite?

CMS: Yes, I love our ales but probably drink them more in the winter. My favourite is in fact the House Ale which is absolutely delicious with a meal and matches well with so many foods including dark chocolate!

POV: You are known more for your bottled beers than for your cask beers. Do you see a time when you would wish to expand your range of cask beers?

CMS: It is very unlikely as we are still very limited in our production here and our bottled production is more profitable for us and easier to distribute.

POV: Your current cask beers have a limited distribution - the Traquair Arms Hotel, Innerleithen (your brewery tap) and occasionally at the Guildford Arms, Edinburgh and George & Abbotsford, Melrose. Why is that and why is brewing suspended in August? I'm sure CAMRA members and real ale lovers in general would love to see your beers in more pubs.

CMS: We cannot supply more outlets on a regular basis for the reasons outlined above. We try as far as possible to supply beer festivals and are delighted to accept one off orders. Brewing has traditionally been suspended in

August because the heat has led to production problems. However, more recently we have brewed throughout the year.

POV: Going back to your bottled beers, most would be eminently suitable for bottle conditioning. Would you ever consider this for some brews?

CMS: Unfortunately, as we are brewing in a very old brewery and fermenting in unlined oak vessels we have always believed pasteurisation to be the safest option. In addition it gives the beer a much longer shelf life - 10 years - which is a great selling point particularly in overseas markets.

POV: From the 1st October there has been an increase in duty on beers over 7.5%ABV. This affects your Jacobite Ale, which is 8%ABV. Will you continue to brew it at this strength and indeed brew any other high strength ales that you may consider in the future?

CMS: At present we are continuing to brew the Jacobite Ale at 8% and put up with the new duty rate. Although it may not alter the beer significantly to reduce the strength it will slightly change the product and it infuriates me that we are being penalised for producing high quality products when a much better policy would be to introduce minimum pricing.

POV: Finally, Traquair House is open to the public. Tell us more about this.

CMS: Traquair House and grounds including the brewery are open every day from Easter to the end of October and there is always a chance to sample the ale in our brewery shop and museum. www.traquair.co.uk

Many thanks to Catherine Maxwell Stuart for speaking to POV. We wish Traquair House and its brewery continued success.



Last Laugh for the Cavalier?

The recent news that the former Scottish and Newcastle ale brands, McEwan's and Younger's, have been sold to Wells & Young's will have come as a surprise to many. Not because Heineken have sold them - after all £20M is a lot of money - but because the South East combo has decided that they are such a good fit for their own portfolio of beers. It is hard to see how the stalwarts of



many a Scottish snug for getting on for a hundred years can be part of the family of hoppy bitters that Young's, formerly of Wandsworth, and Wells of Bedford have been brewing equally as long. The phrase chalk and cheese must surely come to mind. But then they haven't just acquired the right to brew the beers and market them with the brand imagery with which pub goers will be familiar. They also get access to the bars that currently stock



the beers and thus provide a ready income stream. This assumes though that the beers are still worth drinking in the opinion of the punters who are their regular customers. And, as with all beers that acquire wheels, this is where it gets tricky! The brewers who used to own them, Scottish & Newcastle, stocked them in all the pubs they owned in Scotland and the north of England, which was basically the half of the country that Tennent's didn't



own. Being tied houses you drank what the brewery wanted you to drink. Scotland was not a very open market. They sold a lot of beer because there was little choice. When the keg revolution happened in the 1960's, so too McEwan's and Younger's beers became keg. Top quality beers that won beer competitions, they were not. S & N didn't need to market them because the pub estate tied to the brewery did it for them. They chose to pursue global dominance, acquiring strange beers in strange countries. And then they themselves got swallowed up in a corporate battle won by Heineken. To their credit, they did attempt to re-launch the brands and adverts for keg McEwan's appeared on TV this year. In addition, cask versions of the beers, brewed by Caledonian Brewery, were trialled in various pubs. The trials must have gone well enough for W & Y Managing Director, Nigel McNally, to write, "With our expertise in cask beer, we will be looking to reintroduce cask variants of these ales" and that they are "absolutely committed to preserving the iconic ales' Scottish heritage."



Encouraging words from the new owner of beers that have had their glory days. You need to be almost as old as I am to remember when the Diggers in Angle Park Terrace sold McEwan's Heavy that was so good you couldn't leave until the pub closed and the customers would order pints just by holding up fingers. They only sold one beer because it was all they needed to. Clark's Bar in Dundas Street was another gem - this time it was for Younger's IPA. But all this was quite a few years ago now and these cask beers are no longer in regular production. Can we hope that Mr McNally will be true to his word and that Caledonian Brewery, the last chance saloon for full scale brewing in the city since Fountain closed, will once again supply us with those classic ales that were worth the journey to Gorgie? Let us hope so.

Andrew Haswell
CAMRA's Brewery Liaison Officer for Caledonian Brewery

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Borders Booze News

In this issue we start in Peebles where the **County Inn** has undergone refurbishment. It has Belhaven IPA, Greene King Abbot Ale and Old Speckled Hen as regulars plus a guest. Next door, at the **Tontine Hotel**, the one hand pump is dedicated to a beer from Broughton. In addition to Deuchars IPA, Stewart Pentland IPA and Landlord featuring regularly, the **Bridge Inn** can be guaranteed to source some really interesting guest ales from both sides of the Border. At the other end of town the **Green Tree** has Deuchars IPA. Sadly the **Cross Keys** remains closed and any changes here are not likely to happen in the short term.

Along at Innerleithen the **Traquair Arms Hotel** is the sole regular outlet for draught Traquair ales, Landlord and Deuchars being its other regulars. Across the road the **St Ronans Hotel** may only have one hand pump but it features beers from a wide selection of Scottish breweries with beers from Stewart, Tempest and Scottish Borders Brewery appearing regularly.

In Melrose, the **Kings Arms** continues to impress alongside well established real ale outlets **The George & Abbotsford** and **Burts**. It has two guest pumps and Deuchars as its regular. The G&A's four guest pumps offer a wide choice of beers from both sides of the Border, whilst Landlord and beers from

Scottish Borders Brewery go down well at Burts.

In Denholm, the **Auld Cross Keys** is holding a beer festival from 2nd to 4th March – see advert on page 18. Also in the village, the **Fox & Hounds** favours beers from Scottish Borders Brewery and Wylam. In Jedburgh it's good to see real ale raising its profile. The **Forrester's Arms (Belters)** has reintroduced real ale with rotating guest ales on its hand pump. **The Exchange Inn (The Canon)** does similarly on its two pumps. Theakston's, Deuchars and beers from Scottish Borders Brewery are regularly seen but it's Caley's Flying Scotsman that local customers favour most.

Kelso boasts a good selection of real ale outlets, each quite different in style. **Cobbles** restaurant and bar is the place to try Tempest Ales. **The Queen's Head Hotel** is an 18th century inn that has had a contemporary make over inside. **The Cross Keys Hotel** dominates the square and also has a modern interior. Occasionally its guest pump has on a beer from Weetwood Brewery in Cheshire. A cask is brought up by the brewery owner and his wife when they come to stay at the hotel. This is the one and only opportunity to taste this beer north of the border. **The White Swan** is a typical locals pub, whilst

the **Waggon Inn** majors in pub grub. A ten minute drive will take you to Town Yetholm and the **Plough Hotel**, a cosy little inn, then to Kirk Yetholm and the **Border Hotel**, our



made using its own home-grown hops. Close to the Border in the village of Paxton the **Cross Inn** had on Fyne Ales Hurricane Jack.

Moving to the coast and in Eyemouth both the **Ship** and

the **Tavern Bar** have real ale. At Burnmouth the **First & Last** has a new tenant.

branch Borders Pub of the Year 2011. Both are know equally for their food as for their ales. Continuing to focus on food and ale pubs, the **Fishermans Arms** in Birgham has a new tenant, Peter Curwan. Peter assured POV that real ale will continue to feature. Tempest, Scottish Borders Brewery, Fyne Ales, Hadrian & Border and Broughton are just a few of the breweries that will feature on his two guest pumps. Near Chirnside the **Allanton Inn** has two guest pumps dedicated mainly to local breweries. During a call, one of the beers on was Hop Scotch. This was a "one off" ale from Scottish Borders Brewery

And finally back west to Lauder where the **Black Bull** has a new management team. It is certainly committed to real ale with three interesting guest ales on its three hand pumps – J W Lees The Governor, Bays Topsail and Wells & Young Naked Gold – during a visit. All can be tried in third of a pint measures. Up the road, Hazel Threadgall continues to raise the profile of **The Eagle** where Taylor Landlord is its popular regular ale.

Ed- It's impossible to mention every pub in one issue. If your pub has something to tell our readers then let POV know.



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THIRTY-SIX YEARS ON . . .

Whilst clearing up some bookcases recently I came across the oldest Good Beer Guide in our collection, dating from 1976. A glance at the pages covering Scotland suggested that there might be scope for an interesting comparison with the recently published 2012 Guide.

Firstly, let's get some facts and figures out of the way. Including maps, the Scottish section covered just four pages in 1976! In the latest Guide this section has reached the impressive total of forty eight pages. In Edinburgh itself (including Leith, which was listed as a separate town in 1976) there were thirteen entries in 1976, now expanded to twenty five.

However, of these twenty five pubs only four were also listed thirty six years ago. This seemed like a manageable number for a one-day pub crawl, so Hilary and I set off with our intrepid pub-going dog Eddie, knowing that from the informative 2012 Guide all four pubs were dog-friendly. Interestingly, dog-friendliness was not a concept meriting a mention in the 1976 Guide but then many pubs had only three-word descriptions or in some cases none at all! Being a dog could also have made it easier to get into many pubs than if you were a woman, given the number of warnings in the 1976 Guide about men-only bars!

Our journey began at the **Athletic Arms ('Diggers')** on Angle Park Terrace. In 1976 only one real ale was sold, but what a beer – the renowned McEwan's 80/-. Scottish and Newcastle then brewed at Fountainbridge and Holyrood and were one of only five real ale brewers in Scotland. The McEwan's 'Heavy' was still a great beer when we first sampled it at the Diggers around 1983. We had heard about the custom of holding up the number of fingers for the pints required, such was the throng, and it actually worked. On this visit Stewart's replacement 'Diggers' 80/- and Deuchars IPA were available on tall founts plus two guests on handpumps. Much of the pub's interior remains unchanged, with narrow fixed tables and comfortable red seating, black and white tiling and a huge inlaid compass on the floor. The central oak bar is outstanding. Our journey then took us past the demolition site marking the destruction of the last remnants of the Fountainbridge brewery. Just east of Lothian Road lies the Blue Blazer, our second pub. In 1976 this had been described as 'a small town-centre pub enlarged with a new lounge' and there are still two distinct areas, with the beers on the bar in the larger corner room and a popular side room with TV. The **Blue Blazer** has featured up to eight real ales (six handpumps and two founts) in recent years, but on our visit



there were five – Cairngorm Trade Winds, Kelburn Red Smiddy, Stewart '7' and 80/- and Kelburn Dark Moor. The 1976 drinker would only have found Younger's IPA, also brewed in Edinburgh by S&N. We'd not previously tried Stewart's '7' beer, brewed to mark the seventh anniversary of the Loanhead brewery – it turned out to be delicious. It was established in 1889 as the Clan Alpine bar and only became the Blue Blazer in the mid-1970s. The 1889 date is celebrated in the large mosaic floor tiling.

We then headed to Morningside. In 1976 "**Bennet's**" in Maxwell St was listed in the Guide; this has now become Bennet's of Morningside following a change of ownership in 2009. It's a calm and friendly locals' pub just off the busy main road. We found Taylor's Landlord, Houston Killelan, Black Isle Yellowhammer IPA, Caley Deuchars IPA and Edelweiss and Stewart Edinburgh Gold available on the founts (which thankfully are now back). In 1976 Belhaven 60/- and 70/- were the two beers sold.

Our last pub meant a cross-city journey to Comely Bank and the **Stockbridge Tap**. In 1976 this had been called the Raeburn Bar selling Vaux (Edinburgh's Edinburgh Best Scotch or 70/- beer. Vaux was situated at the current Caledonian Brewery site. The pub was subsequently renamed Bert's Bar before becoming the Stockbridge Tap a few years ago. The handpumps displayed Thornbridge Seaforth, Cairngorm Trade Winds, Stewart 80/- and Pentland IPA, Peerless Triple Blonde and Hornbeam Black Coral Stout. The latter two were new breweries to us, so we tried both and the best beer of the day, the Seaforth. The bar has been modernised in a light and pleasant fashion without losing some older features such as the tiling below the dado rail. The walls are adorned with a large and interesting collection of old brewery mirrors. Both conventional and stool-type seats offer a good view of the bustling street outside.

The Stockbridge Tap is linked to the Bow Bar and Cloisters, all three being examples of specialised ale houses, the type of which did not exist in 1976 (and not for many years afterwards). Most of the ales sold in these pubs, and the others that we visited on our day out, came from breweries that did not even exist in 1996, let alone 1976.

A lot had changed in the thirty six years since pubs like Diggers could be described as 'a male beer-drinker's paradise' and yet all four of the pubs we visited also had a timeless charm and a dedication to good beer, which is why days out around Edinburgh pubs have been such great entertainment over the decades.

By the way, at the 1994 halfway point between the 1976 and 2012 Beer Guides none of these four pubs was listed! But that's another story. . . .

Pat Hanson

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Our branch Pub of the Year 2011, the **Bow Bar**, has a new manager. Mike Smith has taken over from Helen McLoughlin who left in August. Regulars will know Mike, who told POV that there are no plans to change a winning formula but merely to focus on good beers, good whiskies and good service, for which the pub is renowned.

In our summer issue, the beer information for two pubs was incorrect so we're happy to put the record straight. **The Caley Sample Room** in Angle Park Terrace boasts eight hand pumps. Deuchars IPA, a Caley seasonal ale, a beer from Tempest and one from Black Isle are the regulars, whilst the four guest pumps feature a mix of Scottish and little-seen English beers. And check out their excellent world-wide range of bottled beers. **The Argyle** in Argyle Place has two hand pumps that regularly feature beers from Inveralmond (Ossian is popular), Tempest, Scottish Borders Brewery and Orkney Brewery, to name but four.

Our summer issue came out before we were able to mention the **Salisbury Arms** in Dalkeith Road. It reopened as a Mitchells & Butlers Village Pub & Kitchen focusing on food as well as real ale. Deuchars IPA is its regular and there are two guest pumps. Also reopened earlier in 2011 after extensive refurbishment was the **Links Hotel** in Bruntsfield.

It too has Deuchars IPA as a regular and two guest pumps dedicated to Scottish breweries. Another hotel, **The Borough** in Causewayside, is now

the **Meadows Hotel** and has Stewart IPA. It's not to be confused with the **Meadow Bar** in Buccleuch Street which is open again following a fire in premises above. It has Caley Deuchars IPA and Flying Scotsman as regulars plus a guest. It's a favourite student haunt and popular for its food. Across the road at the **Dagda Bar** you'll find some interesting ales on the four guest pumps. On the subject of guest ales, the **Cask & Barrel Southside** in West Preston Street with five guest pumps in addition to three regulars, ticks all the boxes. Back to Causewayside and the **Old Bell** has four guest ales plus Deuchars IPA, whilst further down the road **Leslie's Bar**, that late Victorian icon has Deuchars IPA, Stewart 80/- and Landlord as its regulars and three guests. Look out for the pub's



monthly weekend festivals showcasing Scottish breweries. Returning to the cross roads and you'll find **Bierex** on the corner. If Cairngorm is your favourite brewery then this is the pub for you. It has Trade Winds on all the time and the second pump always features a beer from that brewery. **The Steamie** in Newington Road has a new management team. The pub has had a makeover, but is still committed to real ale, with Stewart IPA as its regular plus a guest. Also in Newington Road, the **Reverie** has Deuchars IPA, Caley 80 and a guest. Just the city side of the bypass, the **Cockatoo** in Millerhill has one hand pump serving guest ales mainly from the Belhaven/Greene King list. The latter's XX Mild was in cracking form when we called.

At the **Royal Oak** in Infirmary Street, Heather tells POV that she has a novel way of selecting Scottish breweries for her guest pump; she does it alphabetically. At the time of our call she was at Inveralmond, with Kelburn next in line. No brewery starting with J then! She hopes to get a third hand pump which should speed up the process. Other pubs that tell us they are featuring beers from Scottish breweries on their guest pumps are **Teuchters** in William Street and **Chanter** in Bread Street. Ossian is a regular at Chanter and you'll always find at least one other beer from Inveralmond. Weston's cider is also on here. Another pub where Inveralmond beers are always featured is **McCowan's Brewhouse** in Dundee Street. The brewhouse

remains mothballed which seems a great pity and surely a missed opportunity that would benefit both a brewer and the pub.

Other snippets of info are - **Jenny Ha's** in the Canongate has changed its name to the **Kiderkin**. The **Avoca** in Dean Street is a new real ale outlet to us. Its regular is Deuchars IPA and there is also a guest. Sharpe's Doom Bar was in good form when we called. Its sister pub is the **Orchard** in Howard Place. Following refurbishment **Doctors** in Forrest Road is now a Victorian style food and ale pub. The refurbishment of the **Haymarket Bar** is complete. It has an impressive ten hand pumps offering an excellent range of guest beers from throughout the UK. Across the road **Ryries** by the station had Marston's English Pale

Ale, Theakston's Old Peculiar and Jennings Cock A Hoop, as well as regulars Deuchars and Caley 80 on a visit. The Roseleaf in Leith recently achieved double success in the Scottish Licensed Trade News 2011 Awards. The bar, which sells two real ales, came out top in both 'Beer Quality' and 'Pub Caterer' categories. It has another claim to fame - under its previous guise of the Black Swan it was the birthplace of Edinburgh CAMRA in 1975. **The Sheep Heid** at Duddingston closed in October for refurbishment, and will now be open as a Mitchells & Butlers Village Pub & Kitchen.

Moving to Portobello and the promenade where there are two real ale outlets well worth visiting even out of season.

The Esplanade - known locally as the



ESPY - now has four real ale pumps and there's always something going on. Further east towards Joppa is the **Dalriada**. It has three hand pumps and has live music sessions at weekends. It's closed on Monday and Tuesday during the winter. Both pubs hold beer festivals and their "Meet the Brewer" evenings are very popular. When the sea breezes prove too much then on the main road there's the **Ormerlie**

which has Deuchars IPA and Stewart 80/- as regulars and two guests, as well as a very intelligent and discerning four legged customer! And it's rotating guest ales in the **Three Monkeys** on the High Street.

Keeping to the coast and westwards to Newhaven where the **Old Chain Pier** was closed and boarded up when POV went to print. Hopefully it will find a tenant soon.

And finally, the continuing saga of the **Dell Inn**. No sooner had we mentioned in our summer issue that it was closed, than it reopened, but not for long! At the time of going to print it was still closed, though a notice indicated that it would be opening "soon" as the **Blue Goose Country Pub & Kitchen**.

Ed - It's impossible to mention every outlet in the one issue. If your pub has something to tell our readers then let POV know.

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Beyond the Bypass

We start with two new real ale outlets in Dunbar. **The Royal Macintosh Hotel** by the station has Belhaven IPA plus a guest and the **Castle Hotel** has Deuchars IPA. With **The Rocks**, overlooking the cliffs, and the **Volunteer Arms**, by the harbour, this seaside town is well served for real ale. And a brisk ten minute walk will take you to the **Mason's Arms** in Belhaven, close to the brewery. **The Linton** in East Linton has three cask beers and Innes & Gunn Original on a tall chrome fount. This company is known for its bottled ales and is breaking all exporting targets in that market. It is now testing the home market with a draught product. Now I know you'll say well this is not a cask beer, but it was the first time your correspondent had come across it in draught and he was keen to try it, purely for comparison purposes you'll understand! Actually it was pretty impressive and would stand comparison with your specialist beers found across the Channel. Would it have been even better in cask form? Who knows? Anyway, back to the real stuff and the nearby **Crown** always has four beers on. In North Berwick, the **Dalrymple Arms**, a pub that up to the 1990s was a cask ale mecca, is due to change hands and it will be interesting to see what the future brings in terms of beers. However if the future is not real ale then the town is still very well served by the **Ship, County, Golfers Rest and Auld Hoose**. And on reaching the **Nether Abbey** at the western end of town, you can try its three guest ales in third of a pint measures. Continuing westwards and the **Castle Inn** at Dirleton now has Belhaven

IPA as well as Deuchars IPA and Caley 80. Gullane has a new real ale outlet with Greene King Abbot Ale now on at the **Golf Inn**. The **Old Clubhouse** tried Belhaven IPA but has now reverted to Deuchars; Taylor Landlord remains its other popular regular plus one guest in the winter.



In Haddington, Belhaven IPA has been going down well at the **Victoria Inn** where it is almost a regular. Across at the **Waterside Bistro** beers from Stewart and Scottish Borders Brewery are consistently seen. The **Tyneside Tavern** is known for its excellent guest beers and you can

now try all three in third of a pint measures. Next door at the **Waterloo Bistro** Paul Kinnock has added his second beer, with Flying Scotsman now accompanying Deuchars IPA. At the **Conservative Club**, though both pumps are dedicated to guest beers, Dark Island remains a favourite. Up at Gifford both pubs have seen licensee changes. The **Goblin Ha'** has a new management team. Here Hop Back Summer Lightning continues to be the favourite with locals though Taylor Landlord is an ever popular guest. The other regular beer is Deuchars IPA. Across the road at the **Tweeddale Arms** Kenny Rattray is the new tenant. As you read this, real ale should be on following a problem with the cellar cooler. And when at Gifford why not pop up to the **Garvald Inn**, a cosy village pub, a ten minute drive into the Lammermuir Hills.

Back to the coast and at Aberlady, **Ducks at Kilspindie House** has Deuchars IPA and Old Speckled Hen, whilst along at the **Aberlady Inn**, it's also Deuchars and a guest. And at the **Longniddry Inn** it's also Deuchars. **The Gothenburg** in Prestonpans has beers brewed by Dave Whyte who has set up DemonBrew - see Brewery News. In Musselburgh, **Wetherspoon's David MacBeth Moir** in the old Hayweights cinema should be open in February, 2012. Pop across the road and directly behind the Brunton Theatre you'll find **Staggs**, our Lothians Pub of the Year 2011.

Moving to the other side of the city and the **Retreat Castle Hotel** in Bonnyrigg is now a cask ale outlet, with Stewart beers appearing regularly. In East Calder the **Grapes** has added a second hand pump.

In Ratho the long-established **Bridge Inn** has received a significant make-over under owners Graham & Rachel Bucknall. In a picturesque setting by the Union Canal it has three hand pumps dedicated to Scottish breweries of which Inveralmond, Stewart and Scottish Borders are just three. Finally, in Livingston you have two **Wetherspoons** from which to choose, opposite each other in the Designer Outlet - the **Almond Bank** and the **Newyearfield** which is a **Lloyds No 1**.

Ed - It's impossible to mention every outlet in the one issue. If your pub has something to tell our readers then let POV know.



Bridge Inn, Ratho

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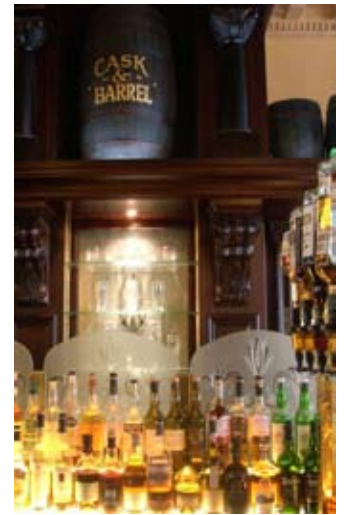
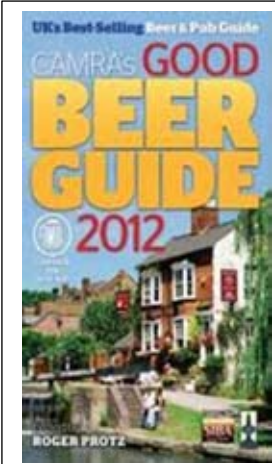
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Brewery News

Belhaven

Belhaven IPA is certainly making its mark and it's great to see the brewery putting its weight behind its first "own-brewed" permanent cask ale for some time. Weighing in at 3.8% ABV it has a good balanced taste of fruit and hops. Also look out for seasonal offerings - December - Howell's Frosty Bells, January - Burns Ale, February & March - Grand Slam Ale.



Broughton Ales

Broughton's Chris Mouat says, "It's been a busy summer at Broughton Ales and it's all set to be a busy winter. By now most publicans will have met our new sales manager Bret Retailick who joins Broughton after completing a Masters in Strategy at Edinburgh University and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome him to our team.

After the success of Pennine Way Bitter, our beer produced exclusively for the award winning Border Hotel in Kirk Yetholm, we are happy to announce that real ale drinkers can now enjoy a pint of Tibbie Shiels produced exclusively for the Tibbie Shiels Inn. After the popularity of the bottled Tibbie Shiels Ale, hotel owner Alastair Moody asked us to produce a version in cask. The ABV was lowered significantly from 6% to 4.2% and a few tweaks were made to the recipe resulting in a dark session ale with good malt flavour and a refreshing hop character. Tibbie Shiels Ale is available all through the year at the Tibbie Shiels Inn near St. Marys Loch, Selkirkshire.

This winter will see the return of Winter Fire, a dark, rich and warming ale at 4.2%, and Hogmanay revelers will be able to celebrate with the First Foot Ale, a light and refreshing hoppy beer also at 4.2%".

Caledonian

Like Belhaven's IPA, Caley's Flying Scotsman has hit the ground running and it makes an ideal addition to its permanent list. Caley's season/guest ales continue to attract and its



"one off" specials brewed for Wetherspoon's Autumn festival proved popular. All eyes will be on the brewery to see just when cask versions of McEwan's and Younger's ales come out. See page 6.

Demonbrew

In the summer, craft brewer Dave Whyte took over the micro brewery at the Gothenburg at Prestonpans and set up his own brewing company, DemonBrew.



His current beers are:

Firehead 3.8% ABV – A golden session ale with citrus hops and a slightly bitter aftertaste.

Demon Black 4.4% ABV – Jet black with hints of coffee and chocolate.

The beers were first seen at festivals such as the Scottish Real Ale Festival and the Alloa Octoberfest. Watch out for them now appearing in pubs throughout the Lothians.

Though Fowler's Ales/Prestonpans Ales are no longer being brewed, Dave will

be brewing a Prestonpans range solely for the Gothenburg. This range is designed to honour the history and tradition of both the Gothenburg and John Fowler & Company that brewed in Prestonpans from the 1745 until 1969. It will include Gothenburg Porter (Regular), Gothenburg 80/- and Battle Beer, plus seasonal beers which will rotate. www.demonbrew.com

Knops Beer Company

Robert Knops tells us that he put a trial beer into Cloisters called "3-threads". This was a blend of all three of his beers which was then dry hopped. The name goes back to the 19th century when beers were blended at the bar from various casks e.g. old(stale), strong and mild ale. If it is a success then he may make it a more permanent feature. Good luck Robert!

Robert is also working on a fourth beer. It is a stout/porter type beer weighing in at around 6% ABV and fairly well stacked with hops. "I may bring this down a wee bit" he said, though Archie at the Stockbridge Tap where it was trialed, kept insisting he add more hops. Although it is probably out by now, Robert was reluctant to say what it would be called or give us a photo of the pump clip.



THE CASK & BARREL – F



Photo: pubinatube.com

QUALITY PUB AT THE FOOT OF BROUGHTON

Scottish Borders Brewery

It's all go down at Chesters Estate, with John's beers in much demand - they brewed their 100,000th pint early in the summer. Top notch though they may be, any new company needs good marketing and John's has certainly been that. The



engaging of a former Miss Scotland to model for his first beer Game Bird certainly caught the eye, but was not without controversy. His crop circle pint photograph (not doctored but actually cut into the field) won a Scottish Creative Awards recognition as best PR stunt. In the autumn John brewed a small batch of Hop Scotch, an ale brewed using hops grown on his estate, thus further emphasising his "Plough to Pint" philosophy. His fourth beer, Holy Cow 4.2% ABV, is expected out for Christmas.

Stewart Brewing

There's so much going on with Steve and the team that it's difficult to know where to start! Let's start with a winning bottled beer. Hollywood, a 5% ABV pale ale, continues to pick up awards and there are many fans out there who enjoyed its brief life in cask form and they hope they might be able to enjoy a pint or two again. And the same goes for Coconut Porter! Anyway, back to what's happening and popular winter beers Cauld Reekie and Three Wise Men will be out again. Hefeweizen, a wheat beer that originated in bottle, was trialled recently in cask form. CAMRA members certainly enjoyed it at the Cask & Barrel Southside in October, so it's good to hear that Steve is doing another brew of this 5.5% ABV beer. And now for a new brew. All Steve told us was that it will be called Stewart XH and will be out soon!



Tempest

Your correspondent finds it hard to keep up with Gavin Meiklejohn down at Kelso! Gavin is what you would call a whirlwind craft brewer. He's always experimenting with recipes and



his beers in the search of "the perfect pint" with appealing flavours and successful combinations of ingredients. And in true craft tradition few, if any, are below 4% ABV. An example of a beer's transition would be his Porter, an ale that has had a few tweaks since its inception as one of his first brews. In whatever guise, this is an outstanding porter. Newest offering will be Long White Cloud 5.6% ABV.

Gavin's move to bottled beers allows him to explore even further the limits of both taste and strength. And most will be in 500mls!

Thistly Cross

Those passing Belhaven Fruit Farm, do not be alarmed. Peter has moved his "shed" to the farm; his original one is now occupied by an agricultural firm. Committed and enthusiastic "craft" cider maker Peter continues to produce a range both in draught and bottles. Most of the draught is in "keg" form but one can't but acknowledge the



flavours and popularity of his products. November saw him launch a 6.9% whisky cider, matured in Glenglassaugh casks. It will culminate next year with a genre busting 14% whisky cider, which will be dry with all the flavours of the whisky cask.

Glenglassaugh will then launch the world's first whisky - a 33 year old spirit - matured, cask conditioned and finished in Thistly Cross cider casks.



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FREE HOUSE



STREET, EDINBURGH

2011 Scottish Real Ale Festival

When the last organiser of the Scottish Real Ale Festival came to me and asked if I could take his place, I was filled with mild panic. Arranging for over 15,000 pints of real ale, cider and perry to be in one place at the same time sounds daunting enough, but our venue for the previous eight years would also be unavailable. It was fitting, then, that our theme should be "Try Something New"!

So we began the hunt for a new building. Our requirements are quite specific; there must be enough room to accommodate a thousand people plus over 200 casks of beer, the scaffold it sits on and the cooling equipment that keeps it at just the right temperature and the venue needs to have great public transport links. The price must also be right, as our favoured tipples need to rest for several days before it's in a fit state to serve and that means hiring a venue for seven days to be open for three. Thankfully we found just such a place on Chambers Street.

On the Sunday before the festival Adam House was an empty shell. However the space quickly filled with all the paraphernalia required to assemble what is effectively a working pub in a few short days. The stillage was erected, cooling assembled, casks laid, bar front built, handpumps placed and the casks vented and tapped by a force of volunteers who generously surrender their time for little more than being fed and watered each day. On Wednesday, a day before we opened to the public, we welcomed the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Scotland for their annual competition to award the best beer in each style, along with an overall champion. This year that honour went to Fyne Ales' Jarl. The competition was followed by a trade session, with brewers, publicans, trade press and bloggers all mingling, with real ale on everyone's lips literally and metaphorically!

The festival proper opened to the public on Thursday, with a queue of some sixty customers waiting patiently to get in, more than I have seen in previous years and a sign of things to come. Nine hours later, with the whole building jam-packed, the festival was busier than it had ever been

on a Thursday. After closing and checking how much beer was left, it was clear that if the trend continued we would be desperately short of beer, despite a 10% increase over 2010. Thankfully, on the Friday, Stewart and Kelburn were able to deliver a further supply. By mid-afternoon the venue was already at its capacity of a thousand and a queue was forming which would eventually stretch halfway to the Cowgate, with a two hour wait for those at the back.

On Saturday we opened with one of the bars very close to dry, so at 2pm with six hundred people already through the door and our supply of souvenir glasses exhausted I took the decision to close admissions. By 6pm there wasn't a pint to be had in the building. Running out of beer is perhaps the best problem a festival organiser can have, but it is a problem and turning people away so early is not a decision I took lightly. We had 4,000 people through the door by 2pm on Saturday, a figure up by almost a thousand over the total attendance for 2010.

We simply didn't expect such a massive increase, even with extra beer ordered.

Overall though, the event was a roaring success and I'd like to thank everyone who made it so: the University of Edinburgh staff who helped us with the building; the volunteers who worked tirelessly to prepare the venue, serve the customers and clear up afterwards; the customers who showed their faith by supporting us despite a change in venue; the fantastic caterers (DM Catering) who fed volunteers and customers alike; the sponsors; SIBA and all the Scottish brewers who supplied the great beer which is ultimately the reason for bringing us all together. I'd also like to promise that I and the rest of our festival committee will do everything we can to prevent a repeat of the shortfalls that left so many disappointed on Saturday - more beer next year!



Owen Bell, Scottish Real Ale Festival Organiser

Winter Beers



I've still to reach my peak!



We all have dates that are significant to us, be they birthdays of loved ones, the day we got married or when we saw our team win the Scottish Cup (with apologies to any Hibeas reading this). I also know when I had my first pint of real ale (summer of 1980 since you ask). However, I do have another significant date, when I did something that I expect to affect the rest of my life. The date is 20 June 1992 and the event was the climbing of my first Munro, Buachaille Etive Mor in Glencoe. I did it as part of a group from the Edinburgh CAMRA branch which included veterans and novices. The veterans did the Aonach Eagach (a ridge I didn't manage to complete until last summer) and we novices did the Buachaille. The evening was spent in the residents' lounge of the Clachaig Inn [photo of sign] and spawned one of my favourite beery/hill walking quotes. As the bar was very busy, the waitress suggested we might want to do a double order. Quick as a flash one of our number said "We'll have twenty four pints of Caledonian 70/- please!"

Since then, I have manfully plugged away each year, climbing my 50th in 1998 (Stob Binnein) and my 100th in 2007 (Beinn Bhuidhe). Whilst I did nothing special to mark my 50th Munro, I invited ten people whom I had previously walked with to help me with my 100th. As it is located at the head of Glen Fyne and there just happens to be a brewery in the glen, it was chosen with great care. We had an excellent night in the brewery, which more than compensated for the miserable weather we had to endure on the hill.

I had a self imposed target of reaching the halfway point of 142 by my 50th birthday at the end of September this year and to that end set off in April to do the first of what was intended to be twenty two this year. Despite my best efforts (honest!), it was not to be and fell short by four. One of the guys I walked with does not tick them off and

gently remonstrated with me for doing so. However, without a target I would not be out on the hills as often as I am nor get to places that the majority of us don't.

When I started hill walking all those years ago, the Highlands was a bit of a beer desert and getting a decent pint after our day on the hills took a lot of organising. Fortunately, over the last twenty years, ten breweries have started up in the Highlands, making finding real ale much easier. So much so that, when The Scotsman ran a series of pullouts entitled Scotsman Recommends, I was able to supply them with my recommendations for the five best pubs in Scotland to have a pint in after a day on the hills. Whilst I cannot remember the fifth one, the other four were the Clachaig in Glencoe (of course), the Grog and Gruel in Fort William, the Sligachan Hotel on Skye and the Glenisla Hotel near Glenshee. The moral of the story is that taking up hill walking needn't impinge on your ability to get a decent pint of real ale.

As for my Munro career, I will keep plugging away and will hit the halfway point early this coming summer. Will I complete them - who knows, but I will give it my best shot, starting with the Cuillins in Skye?

Colin Valentine, CAMRA National Chairman



POV wishes to thank www.walkhighlands.co.uk for permission to use the photo of the Cuillins.



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Savage meets Rankin



The March darkness spider-webbed and steamed on the bar's window panes. Edinburgh Castle, the Balmoral Hotel, the buildings on The Mound glowed in the black sky above the city, but they didn't help you get to The Café Royal. No, it was all hunched

shoulders and long strides through unbelievably ill-lit and deserted streets and then neon pink light dripping down The Café Royal's facade. Savage darted inside.

There was a large island bar surrounded by ceramic murals and Victorian and Baroque flourishes beneath a detailed plasterwork ceiling. Incandescent globes and mirrors warmed the interior but also created unsettling shadowplay. The place was crowded. After a few circuits of the bar, Savage settled at a tall round table near one of the doors and ordered a water. Another pint might dull his wits. He was early, as usual. Earlier he'd downed a bowl of hot Cullen Skink and a pint at the Halfway House before crossing over to New Town by way of Waverley Bridge. The Scott Monument, a terrifying Gothic missile at night, marked the divide between old and new, dark and light. So many juxtapositions, so many questions.

Inside The Royal, waiters cruised by with platters of oysters as Savage studied patrons over his glass of water. Every time someone entered he wondered if that was him. Savage smiled to himself. It was hard to believe the little bird he'd sent had actually resulted in this fateful meeting. This was Bourdain-esque, sitting in one of Edinburgh's most historic bars waiting to speak with Ian Rankin, crime fiction mastermind and the latest scion in Edinburgh's great literary lineage.

He flipped through the second-hand copy of Rankin's "The Black

Book" that he'd picked up earlier in the day and swirled his glass until the ice clinked. When he looked up a tall man in a flannel overcoat approached. Others didn't trail after him and no one tried to catch his attention, but it was him. It was Ian Rankin. Savage jumped out of his seat to shake his hand.


"What'll you have?" Rankin asked nonchalantly with a tilt of his shaggy, straight brown hair toward the bar. A subtle Scottish brogue tinged his speech. "Whatever you're having," countered Savage. He was sure his eyes were fit to burst from the adrenaline rush. Rankin carried two pints of Deuchars IPA to the table and sat easily across from Savage. He'd been having dinner (and a few pints) upstairs before coming down to meet this travel writer from America. They briefly exchanged pleasantries and Savage marveled at how at ease the conversation went. "When I read your books, I think 'these are quite dark.' That dark aspect, is that what's going to start drawing people to places rather than the wholesome, touristy stuff? Perhaps travellers don't want to be sold something that's half right," Savage said and sipped his pint.

Rankin leaned over the small table. "There are certain travellers who don't want the world to be shown to them in aspic. They actually want to see the real city, not something in amber, not something preserved - something with a bit of life about it, not just Disney World, not a Disney-fied city. I think Edinburgh, if you just scratch the surface, you leave behind that Disney-fied city. You know, the Castle, the bagpipes-" "The Royal Mile," interjected Savage. "Yeah, get rid of that. And you can actually find an incredibly interesting city just below the surface with lots of very interesting stories. I mean the stories are actually built into the stone here," Rankin gestured around the Royal. "Everywhere you go there's something etched into the stone, a story can be told. It means you become an explorer. You're not led around by your nose, shown stuff. But it's not too dangerous, it's not too dark. It's just dark enough." He leaned back and glanced out the steamy windows.

"Dark enough to be interesting," Savage nodded. "You obviously know Edinburgh extremely well. Where are some off-the-beaten-path places you'd recommend travellers visit in Edinburgh?" The Royal was packed and getting louder as bottles clanked against tabletops and laughter pierced the hum of conversations.

Rankin folded his hands in front of the Deuchars. "One thing I would do is take a walk along the Water of Leith, which is a little secret river that runs through Edinburgh. You can pick it up at Bell's Brae. It's in a part of the city called Dean Village. It's not far from the west end of Princes Street, about a 10-15 minute walk. You can walk all the way to Leith from there. It's about four miles, but at any point you can come back into the city. You can do a village-y bit like Raeburn Place, which is nice. Then you come down to Leith and you've got the Leith of Trainspotting but then you've also got really nice Michelin restaurants. You get a sense of a secret city that hides itself away from the world. It's quite a nice walk to take and it's all on the flat." Savage had been planning to check out Dean Village and it was nice to hear confirmation from such a reputable source. "Obviously we've got all these hills that are free to go up," Rankin continued. "You can climb up Calton Hill at the east end of Princes Street. You can climb up Arthur's Seat. You can climb up to the castle and where you're standing is an extinct volcano. You're going to get 360-degree views of the city for nothing. Quite nice." Savage sat transfixed, his notebook and pen untouched as Rankin rattled off the kind of common knowledge only obtained from living in a place for decades.

"But also I think a bit of Edinburgh that's not much used by pedestrians or by tourists would be round about the bridges," Rankin looked Savage in the eyes. "You walk south from North and South Bridge and you actually see layers of the city. It's nice, then it's a bit rotten, then it's nice again. You go past some really nice



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shops: a lot of second-hand shops, junk shops, record shops. You name it. It's a very studenty part of town. Some interesting bars. But a lot of tourists are scared off because it looks a bit rough at first, but it's not. I don't think so."

Rankin had spent years in Edinburgh attending university. Surely he knew of some excellent pubs for an enthusiast like Savage to explore. "You mentioned interesting bars - what's your favorite pub in the city? Is it this one?" Savage asked. The Deuchars was disappearing with alarming rapidity. "I'd have to say The Oxford Bar," Rankin brushed the hair from his eyes, "because that's where Rebus drinks all the time, but there are some terrific small local bars in Edinburgh. Every part of Edinburgh's got a good pub. I like Kay's Bar in New Town, Clark's Bar in the New Town. Here's very good. Bennet's Bar, which is in Tolcross. Canny Man in Morningside. There're so many nice, old bars all with their own atmosphere."

Savage nodded. This was good, real good. "Alright, that's a nice list of pubs. So what's the malt you come back to again and again?" Rankin hardly hesitated. "Probably Highland Park, which is from Orkney. Highland Park is good. It's not lifeless, but it's not too heavy. It's not too peaty. It's a nice amalgam of things. A little bit of seaweed, a little bit of iodine, a little bit of heather, a little bit of peat. It's just a nicely balanced whisky." "Right, yeah. I think it's got a little bit of everything. That's actually what my wife and I drank at our wedding ceremony," Savage reminisced. "Are you talking about the 12 year?" "Eighteen, preferably." A row of single malt bottles ran along the top shelf inside the island bar.

Rankin seemed perfectly content to chat so Savage looked at his notes and continued, "What's your favourite corner of Scotland?" "There's a little bit of Scotland north and east of Inverness called the Black Isle. Number one it's not an isle, it's not an island, it's attached to the mainland. Number two it's not black. But it's beautiful. It's near enough to Inverness so you're still quite close to a big town. But it's got dolphins. You look and see dolphins playing, like 30 yards away. It's got its own brewery, Black Isle Brewery. It's got tiny wee villages, good food, good seafood. It feels like you're a long way away from anywhere. I like it. I like Orkney as well. I mean, Orkney's phenomenal, but a little bit harder to get to." Rankin pulled out his phone and started flicking through photos of Black Isle for Savage. They were gorgeous, unblemished blue sky shots. It's a straight three-hour shoot north from Edinburgh.

The two men drained the last swallows from their pints. It'd been a long, friendly chat and Rankin probably had places to be. "I have one final question: It seems to me that Edinburgh is a character in its own right. Do you think of it as a character as you storyboard or plot out your stories?" Savage asked and waited. "Yeah, I think Edinburgh is the most important character in anything I write," Rankin confirmed. "When I walk through it, it's almost as if it's breathing. I can feel it breathing. It's got a history, it's got a life, it's got lungs, it's got a

heart, got a brain. I mean it's like any city in a way. Every city is an entity in itself, but Edinburgh is easily visible because it's so small, so containable. And because it has these extremes: it has the Old Town/New Town, east/west thing going on. To the west you've got the Hearts ground, to the east you've got the Hibs ground. To the north you've got the rationalism and to the south you've got the chaos of the Old Town. To me it feels like a physical entity. And it changes, it grows, it's organic. And the books have been an attempt to chart the organic changes of the city and what that tells us about the physical and mental changes of Scottishness. It was really useful to me that during the course of writing the Rebus novels we got a Parliament."

"Yeah, that's right," said Savage. Rankin sat back, the foam sliding down the inside of his empty pint glass. "And everybody was saying what does it mean to be Scottish? Why are we different from the English? Why do we need this? And it's been this whole thing in the last 10 or 15 years with people saying: "Who are we?" Of course literature, even if it's crime fiction, is very good at asking the questions. Not so good at answering them, but good at asking them and readers like to reflect on them. I think crime fiction is the best possible genre for looking at where we are, how did we get here and where are we going. What social problems have we got? What psychological problems have we got? What religious problems have we got? What economic problems have we got? Crime fiction can take on all of that." "They're all mysteries," Savage muttered. "Yeah. So why would you want to write anything else?" Rankin smiled a crooked smile.

Ed - POV wishes to thank Ian Rankin and Keith Savage for allowing us to publish this article, which first appeared on Keith's website:

www.traveling-savage.com



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Why increased duty should worry cask ale drinkers

Roughly twelve months ago the government published a review of UK alcohol taxation, the stated aim of which was to address the consumption of cheap, 'super strength' lagers. By raising the duty on beer over an alcohol by volume (ABV) of 7.5% the government hoped to make these drinks too expensive for problem drinkers. From the 1st of October 2011 this review became law. At first glance this might not seem like a bad idea - the increased cost of cigarettes over recent years has made many people reconsider their habit, so in theory the same could hold for strong lagers. Also, not many cask beers are brewed over 7.5% so regular pub goers might not notice much of a difference. So why does this duty rise make me so annoyed?

Firstly, in the spirit of full disclosure, I enjoy stronger bottled beers reasonably often, as many CAMRA members do. Imported American and Belgian strong ales are fantastic. There's a small, but fledgling, movement of British brewers who are looking to do similar things and these producers will be unfairly hit by this rise in duty. Why unfairly? According to the British Beer & Pub Association, beer over 7.5% constitutes less than 0.5% of total UK alcohol sales. How is this going to affect 'problem drinkers'? By my own amateur observations, they tend to drink cheap ciders and easily acquired bulk-buy lager (universally around 5%). However in Scotland this affects Traquair House Brewery's Jacobite Ale at 8%ABV. With VAT also payable on this raised duty, brewers will be hit hard and faced with a few stark choices: continue brewing and passing a further price rise onto customers, amend the recipe to fit under the 7.5% ceiling or cease brewing their stronger beers altogether. But if you're not one to be ordering American IPAs from the internet or caught stumbling over the names of Trappist producers then why would it matter? Well,

as soon as legislation is passed that forces makers of a product to alter their recipes, this could have a trickle-down effect to their other beers. With prices of malt and hops rocketing, some brewers might re-assess their other recipes thus altering the taste and character of these beers.

There is, however, one sector of the industry that receives relief with the treasury reducing duty on beer under 2.8% - a move ostensibly to encourage the production of lower strength alternatives as few, if any, beers are currently produced at this ABV level, let alone below it. Only time will tell whether this succeeds, but speaking to a few brewers, the market for cask beer at this strength is small for a reason - low ABV beers are hard to produce and keep less long in pub cellars. Also those who qualify for small brewers' relief cannot claim this low ABV discount.

British duty is now the highest in Europe, higher even than in Scandinavia, and as anyone who's bought a beer in Sweden knows, the customer really has to fork out over there. Rising tax means rising pub prices - for all strengths. Problem drinkers will still get drunk, supermarkets will still sell pallet-loads of cheap lager and it will be the regular pub-goers who are left to pay more, irrespective of their ABV choice.

Richard Taylor

CAMRA member and editor of The BeerCast - www.thebeercast.com
a web-based forum for all things beer-related in Edinburgh

Ed- POV predicts that a 2.8% ABV cask beer will come on the market in 2012.



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*In Portobello by the sea,
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The salty spray that fills the air,
Dries the throat and guides you there;
To let the liquid moist the lips,
Bringing comfort, as down it slips.*

*Now in this bar, I've heard the tale,
Of a picky mutt that knows his ale;
Bracken is the canine's name,
Who knows about the brewing game.
He shall slurp and wag his happy tail,
When one gives him Cask Conditioned Ale;
Please never give him meagre keg,
Or he'll stare at you and cock his leg.*

*This loyal friend, this faithful pet,
May be elevated yet;
CAMRA could, with no real fear,
Promote him as a judge of beer.
So if one's found down Joppa way,
And a thirsty throat is out to play,
Go slurp some ale, have a few,
With the dog who knows about his brew.*

George Robertson

Guess the Pub?

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Also go in! (Answers of page 23)*



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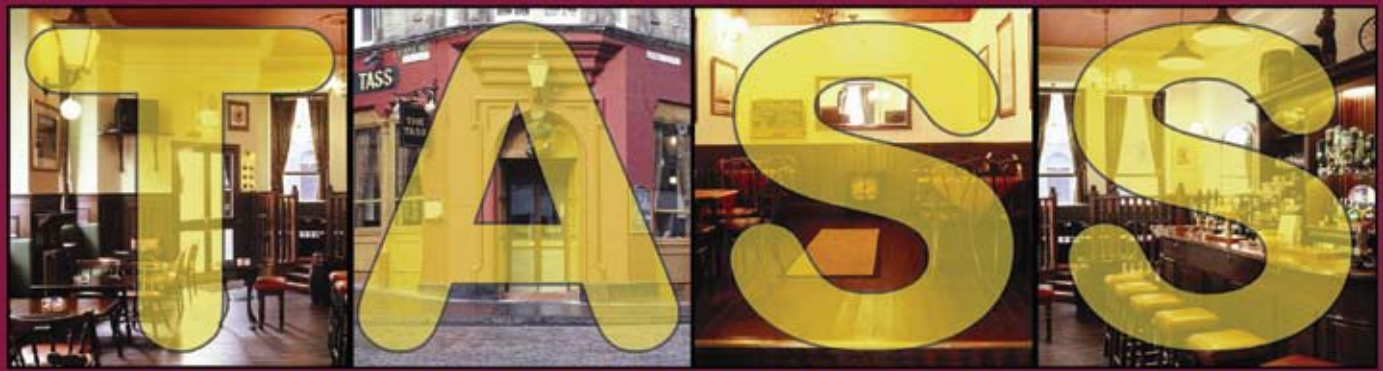
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My Patch - The First Ten Years!

Harvey L. Milne

Cask Marque Assessor & Trainer.

Many readers will know me as the Cask Marque Assessor and Trainer for Scotland and now also Northern Ireland (see What is Cask Marque?). When I took the area on in 2001 I had around seventy outlets in my patch. I now have nearly two hundred and fifty and a further ten in Northern Ireland. The current total number of Cask Marque accounts in the UK is over 7500. My Cask Marque accounts are spreading. Now my area covers Watnish to Whithorn and Berwick to Wick and all points in between. The latest Cask Ale Report (www.caskreport.co.uk) confirms that the cask ale share in the on trade is up again and is now around 15% - bucking the trend in the drinks industry as a whole. We now have almost eight million cask ale drinkers in the UK.

Who are they?

Cask ale is no longer seen as an old man's drink. We have about two million drinkers in the eighteen to thirty four age group and we also have around 1.5 million women drinking cask ale.

Why?

There is no doubt in my mind that the quality of cask ales in the UK and in Scotland in particular is improving. Many of the big pub companies continue to send their staff on our Award in Beer and Cellar Quality courses and are reaping the benefits. Cask Marque also offers a Rent a Trainer Scheme.

We have over sixty microbreweries in Scotland in addition to Caledonian and Belhaven - the "big two". The number

of "fair size" breweries is growing; some have already moved and expanded or are currently doing so. And then we have all the smaller operations even down to the one in Plockton supplying only a handful of local pubs. The smaller breweries cannot compete on price so they have to compete on quality, service and diversity of flavour etc and in my meanderings I get to sample many excellent beers. (Join the queue if you want my job!)

Cask Marque is growing in public awareness and along with the Good Beer Guide is seen as an excellent way of promoting Cask Beers. The major pub groups also tend to have two or three beer festivals per year. They are also installing cask ale to accompany food and increase the footfall.

Beer, Food and Health

This could well be the topic for another article. Suffice to say for the moment that beer in moderation has many nutritional and healthy attributes and is an excellent accompaniment for food because of its lower alcohol content in comparison with wine. I am also a Beer Academy tutor and they are trying to promote all sorts of courses on beer and food, tasting beer etc.

You can now load the Cask Marque Accounts on to all sorts of electronic devices and you can send a text message with your post code to 60300 to find the nearest Cask Marque Pubs. We have dragged Cask Marque into the 21st Century!

*See you around
Harvey*

Harvey was raised in Alloa, the Burton-on-Trent of Scotland where there were four working breweries and three distilleries within nosing distance.

Harvey spent nine years as a missionary in various locations with Allied Breweries south of the border before returning to Alloa in 1977 to take up the post of Quality Control Brewer, as well as several different technical roles until 1998 when the brewery was closed.

He transferred to Caledonian Brewery in Edinburgh before setting up on his own in RV Quality Management & Training in 2001. Harvey now looks after the interests of Cask Marque north of Hadrian's Wall and in Northern Ireland. Harvey has always maintained a keen interest in Brewing History and he is President of the Scottish Brewing Archive Association.

*Harvey Milne
Cask Marque*

The Cask Marque scheme is operated by an independent body called Cask Marque Trust which is a limited company and a non profit making organisation. The company is run by a management committee elected by its members who pay a subscription and includes representatives from brewers, retailers, trade bodies and consumer groups.

Pubs that join the scheme are visited unannounced by an independent assessor twice a year.

The assessor checks all cask ales on sale for - temperature, appearance, aroma and taste. If all beers reach the required standard then the pub passes and it receives a plaque, framed certificate and merchandising material to inform its customers of the award and their rights. See www.cask-marque.co.uk

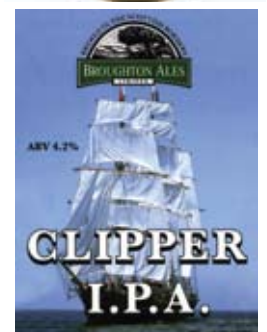


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Branch Matters

Our Chairman's Bit

By the time you read this the three day heat wave at the end of September will be no more than a passing memory. Did I actually sit outside in the hot sunshine sipping a delicious pint of real ale? Yes I did! No wonder folk think that the seasons are more confused and mixed up than in the past. On the other hand CAMRA's annual calendar shows no such behaviour. It is not only clearly defined but also relentless.

No sooner had the 2012 Good Beer Guide (GBG) appeared in September than it was time to start finalising entries for the following year. By the time you read this our so called 'Hit List' for 2013 will have been drawn up. This contains pubs that have met the quality threshold by means of beer scores submitted by members. There is definitely no horse trading or any other sleight of hand in this matter. The entries are ranked by quality score and there is also a dose of statistics involved. However the 'Hit List' is not the end of the matter because usually there are about twice as many outlets on the list than there are final allowed entries for The Guide.

So in Feb/March there will be a GBG 'selection meeting' to reduce the number of entries to meet the guide's space allocation for our branch. That is done by means of a members' vote. The more members who attend to vote, the more representative are the results – would you wish your favourite pub to miss out because of insufficient votes? So do please endeavour to attend or request a postal vote. Details will appear in What's Brewing. The Good Beer Guide is in competition with a number of pub/beer guides, but if any of our readers can name any other publication that is compiled from an equally vast number of independent sources I will happily stand them a pint of real ale in a pub of their choosing within the branch area!

But what about our Branch Pub of the Year (POTY) contest? Well, that has its own annual calendar. It is tied in to the GBG selection process. After all, it would be somewhat unusual to have a POTY that was not in the Good Beer Guide! Indeed, voting for POTY is part of the GBG selection meeting but, after that, it is on its own. Once the winners and runners up for each of our three branch areas have been decided, a selected team of members visits the chosen pubs so that a final decision can be made to find the overall branch winner. Then, of course we visit the winners to present their richly deserved awards. Arguably, this is one of the most pleasant of our year long list of activities.

It's a pity, you might say, that the branch does not have its own beer festival. True, but there is of course the small matter every June of the Scottish Real Ale Festival and as far as I remember that has always taken place in the Capital. By the time that event has been tidied away the truly dedicated amongst us are limbering up for the Great British Beer Festival in London in August. Time then for a



wee break, but not for too long because it is of course September again and time for the next Good Beer Guide launch. There is no doubt about it, being an active CAMRA member does bring a sense of purpose to the year and is mostly fun at the same time.

Roger Preece

Our Social Secretary's bit

It's been another encouraging period on the social side of our branch. My previous couple of articles have mentioned good attendances at social events and I'm pleased to report that this has continued recently.

Our main regular activity has remained the monthly Two Pub Socials. For these, branch members visit two good quality real ale outlets in different areas of Edinburgh. Recently these have included the Edinburgh University area (Doctor's and Sandy Bell's), City Centre (Abbotsford and Queen's Arms), Broughton Street (Cask & Barrel and Barony Bar) and Ardmillan (Diggers and Caley Sample Room). These have continued to be popular, with the August event in Broughton Street attracting our largest attendance yet.

As well as the above, branch members have enjoyed a number of other social events since our last issue of Pints of View. Back in May, a group of us took part in the Forth Valley Mild Trail which was organised by members of the CAMRA branch in that area. This involved getting the train through to Dunblane then journeying on to Bridge of Allan, Stirling and Falkirk visiting some of the excellent pubs in the region which were taking part in CAMRA's 'Mild In May' event. Some great pints of mild, as well as several other beer styles, were enjoyed by all present.

Another good day out was had on our annual summer trip round some of the fine pubs of the Borders. After a successful visit to Innerleithen and Peebles last year, this year we went to Melrose and Galashiels. With many of our members residing in Edinburgh, it's always good to visit other areas of our branch and let members staying in these areas meet up with us.

Our most recent social event was to promote the launch of 2012 Good Beer Guide. A number of members met up in our current Pub of the Year, the Bow Bar, before dividing into groups to hand out the "congratulations" packs to the Edinburgh pubs which made the Guide and to have a few beers along the way. [photo of new members] In October we held our annual "Invitation to new members" evening at the Cask & Barrel Southside, where members who had joined in the past twelve months were invited to come along and meet our branch committee and enjoy a beer or two.

Although more and more people are joining our branch social events there's always room for more. So, if you are a current member who wants to take part in more activities with your local branch or simply someone who appreciates a good pint and would like to find out more about CAMRA, then feel free to come along to any of our events and meet us. Details of all social events are sent out to our members through our CAMRA Calling newsletter and are also on our branch website.

Cheers, Don Bell

Our Membership Secretary's bit

Hi, I'm Mike Just and I took on the roll of membership secretary from Dave Perry in June 2011. Branch members are most likely to recognise me from the communications that I regularly send out and also as the person who responds to some of your questions. Of course, with more than 850 members in our branch, this can be quite a task indeed! Yet I am well supported by my branch committee colleagues, as well as by other branch members.

Indeed it's the direct communication with members, whether by email or at our numerous events that I most enjoy. Recognising that different members will participate in CAMRA in different ways, I am often asked "How can I become more active in CAMRA?" When I asked myself this same question nearly a year ago, my path led to the role as membership secretary! For those that have a similar interest in increasing membership or participation in our branch in other ways, I can offer the following suggestions:

In terms of recruitment, our biggest influx of new members takes place at the annual Scottish Real Ale Festival where we have a captive market. We also have new members who join by completing one of our membership forms that can be found in various real ale pubs throughout our branch area.

In terms of retention, the majority of members stay with CAMRA in the knowledge that the organisation's core of active volunteers is working successfully to uphold CAMRA's commitment to campaign for and support real ale, the breweries that produce it and the pubs that serve it. Of course that active core stays with us because it is dedicated to "the cause".

In terms of activation, our branch meetings and social events are great ways to become involved in branch activities. Dates for these appear in What's Brewing, our national monthly newspaper, and also on our branch website (see top of page) so why not come along? (See "Don's bit") At this time of year our main focus is on submitting entries for the 2013 Good Beer Guide. (See "Our chairman's bit.") Other "tasks" for which we are always seeking volunteers are, delivering membership forms to pubs, becoming a deliverer of our twice yearly magazine Pints of View and carrying out pub surveys as requested by our Pubs Officer. I mentioned the Scottish Real Ale Festival. Of course helping on the membership stand is only one of many duties. Volunteering to help at the Festival is a great way to meet like-minded real ale fans and you get a free t-shirt as well as beer and food vouchers – not bad, eh? Read more about the festival on page 14.

If you would like to chat to me about any of the above topics then I can be reached by email at memsec@edinburghcamra.org.uk or come and chat to me at one of our meetings or socials.

Cheers, Mike

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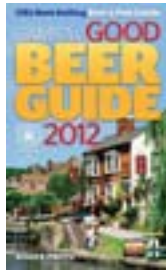
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THREE CHRISTMAS CRACKERS!

CAMRA's 2012 Good Beer Guide

BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING, INDEPENDENT GUIDE TO GOOD BEER AND GOOD PUBS

Now in its 39th year, the Good Beer Guide has details of more than 4,500 pubs across the country serving the best real ale. There's also a unique brewery section listing all the breweries in the UK - micro, regional and national - that brew real ale, with tasting notes for hundreds of their beers. And much more. £15.99 or £11.00 to CAMRA members (plus postage)



CAMRA at 40!

This book, edited by Roger Protz, celebrates 40 years of campaigning with contributions from beer writers, members of the brewing industry and many others who have been involved with CAMRA.

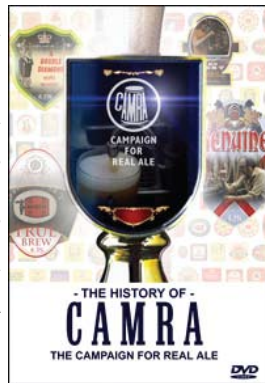
£7.99 or £6.99 to CAMRA member (plus postage)

Buy direct from CAMRA at www.camra.org.uk/shop or telephone 01727 867201



The History of CAMRA now available on DVD!

Learn about the birth and early years of CAMRA in this riveting documentary which is packed with archive material provided by CAMRA members and interviews with the people who were there. The film charts the campaign's inception on a holiday in Ireland, its growth in the 70's and early 80's and the evolution of CAMRA into the industry-shaping organisation it is today. £9.99 (plus postage)



CAMRA's 2012 Members' Weekend and AGM

The CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM 2012 will be held at The Riviera Centre in Torquay on 30th March-1st April 2012. It will provide members with the opportunity to engage in CAMRA's national campaigns and discuss future policy and direction. It also gives members the chance to catch up with each other over a pint, visit recommended pubs and go on organised trips. For full details go to www.camra.org.uk/agm

Guess the Pub?

Did you guess the pub from its sign?

(A) Dirty Dick's, (B) Kenilworth, (C) Scott's.

A Campaign of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer tax now!

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

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

Your Details	Direct Debit	Non DD
Title _____ Surname _____	Single Membership (UK & EU) £20 <input type="checkbox"/>	£22 <input type="checkbox"/>
Forename(s) _____	Joint Membership (Partner at the same address) £25 <input type="checkbox"/>	£27 <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____	For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.	
Address _____	I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association	
Postcode _____	I enclose a cheque for _____	
Email address _____	Signed _____ Date _____	
Tel No(s) _____	Applicants will be processed within 21 days	

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____

Forename(s) _____

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

12/10

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The Direct Debit Guarantee

This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debit.

If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or an alternative agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.

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