



Issue 59

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

FREE

Summer 2012

Going POTY . . . Cobbles Inn, Kelso takes Branch “Pub of the Year” title

When you have a super pub and restaurant and you add to that a range of exceptional real ales brewed by yourselves, then you have all the ingredients for success. CAMRA’s branch members clearly thought so when they awarded Cobbles Inn not only their Borders Area award but also their overall branch title Pub of the Year 2012.

Gavin and Annika Meiklejohn took over Cobbles in May 2007 and in April 2010 Gavin, a brewer by profession, set up Tempest Brewing Company in a former dairy just five minutes walk from the pub. Since then Annika has been running Cobbles, with all Gavin’s energy going into brewing his excellent ales.

On presenting their certificates, branch chairman Roger Preece commented on how the Pub of the Year assessors were impressed not only with the quality of the ales but also with the friendly service and the pub’s community focus. He pointed out that Cobbles has come first out of three hundred and fifty branch outlets, no mean achievement! Annika said, “We’re delighted to have been voted CAMRA’s Best Pub of 2012, not only for the Borders



Gavin and Annika Meiklejohn receive their certificates from branch chairman Roger Preece.

but as the overall winner for Edinburgh and the Lothians as well! It is a huge achievement that we are very proud of. And to receive a letter of congratulations from John Lamont our MSP and for him to mention our award in parliament is such a great honour. We would like to thank our wonderful staff for their hard work and dedication and also thanks to the guys at Tempest for producing such great beers.”

Full details of our Branch Pub of the Year awards appear on page 3.



This year the Scottish Real Ale Festival is at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange at Slateford - 28 to 30 June.

See page 6 for full details.

In this Issue:

- The Interview
- New branch pub guide out this summer
- CAMRA’s e-petition against beer tax
- The case against (and for) return trays
- Brewery and pub news
- Pub crawls
- Branch news and views
- And lots more

Interview with John Henderson of Scottish Borders Brewery on page 5.



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

The Ed's bit

Hello fellow real ale drinkers. First a bit of drum-banging! Our branch magazine is a winner! Pints of View has taken the Scotland & Northern Ireland Camra Branches "Magazine of the Year" title. We're really chuffed at this award. Of course all the credit goes to everyone who contributes to our magazine, our advertisers whose support ensures that we are able to print and to Morgan, our printer, without whose help and expertise with the graphics and layout, I'd be floundering. Thanks to you all.

I'm writing this amidst rising beer prices, the main cause being a Westminster government hell-bent on taxing beer "to death". These swingeing duty rises are bound to impact on our pubs and indeed could well spell the death of many. CAMRA is determined to campaign against the beer tax and will focus on forcing a debate in parliament. It will do so by appealing to beer drinkers to sign an e-petition. The target is to attract 100,000 signatures which will compel the government to order a debate. Our national chairman, Colin Valentine, writes in greater detail on page 7 I would urge you to read Colin's article and sign the e-petition.

On another national issue, CAMRA waits to see if Westminster will take a stronger line with pub companies to ensure that they adopt a better and fairer deal for their hard-pushed tenants.

On a positive note, never has there been a greater choice of beers from a greater range of breweries. Our branch covers Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders and within our area alone we have ten breweries and one cider maker. We have two new boys on

our block. Alechemy (yes, that's the right spelling!) Brewery has just started brewing in Livingston and Barney's Beer is moving from Falkirk to Edinburgh and hopes to be brewing later in the year. (See Brewery News for more details.)

Focusing on Branch affairs, there will be a new edition of our Real Ale Guide out later this summer. Preparation for this has been massive, with every real ale outlet in our branch (over 350) being surveyed. Because of the need for this information to go first and foremost towards guide content, our Pub news will come in a different and shorter form in this issue. I know this will disappoint readers, but I hope you will understand; and hey, why not buy the guide and get up to date information on all real ale pubs in our branch? See page 3 for further details.

And now to people. Don Bell, our social secretary, is leaving for pastures new. In his short time as social secretary Don has transformed the social side of our branch. His "Two Pub Socials", visiting two pubs in an evening every month, have been particularly successful. His enthusiasm has rubbed off on us all, even on an old worthy like myself! We wish Don, Samantha and baby Jessica all the very best.

And, finally, I end on a sad note. Along with many others in the pub and brewing industry I was shocked to learn of the death of Alan McBurnie of Caledonian Brewery. Alan was a lovely guy and so passionate about beer. There was nothing Alan didn't know about brewing, the technical side of beer dispense and quality control. Many publicans owe a lot to Alan's expertise; he will be sadly missed. Cheers, Alan.

Fred



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MORE WINNERS . . .

Our Pub of the Year Award scheme is initially broken into three areas, Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders. Each area produces a winner and a runner-up. The winners are then pitted against each other to establish an overall branch winner, this year being Cobbles Inn at Kelso, which of course was also the Borders winner.

The Edinburgh winner is the Cask & Barrel Southside; runner-up the Bow Bar.

The Lothians winner is the Volunteer Arms (Staggs) in Musselburgh; runner-up the Grey Horse at Balerno.

The Borders runner-up is the Craw Inn at Auchencrow.

Cobbles will now go forward to the Scotland & Northern Ireland branches heats and the winner of that will make the national finals. Congratulations to all winners and good luck to Cobbles in these next stages.

Jane and Paul Ng with Grey Horse regulars Graham Blamire and Jack McCordle.



Craw Inn manageress Susan Hay displays the pub's certificate



Branch chairman Roger Preece with Cask & Barrel Southside manager Matt Cronin



Bow Bar manager Mike Smith shows off his certificate.

Nigel shows off his certificates to a couple of his regulars.

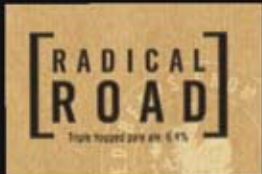


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Alan McBurnie - An appreciation

On Saturday 7th of April in the sample cellar at Caledonian Brewery, just before the guests left to head to the Edinburgh v Toulouse Heineken Cup Quarter final, I asked them for a few minutes hush.

I had to make mention of someone who was not with us that day. This was an occasion he would have loved, fussing and bustling around the sample cellar making sure the beer was perfect, pulling pints behind the bar, anticipating the game and making sure people enjoyed themselves. Sadly that was the first time for a very long time I knew he would not be with us and I wanted to dedicate the day to his memory.

Alan McBurnie would have loved Edinburgh beating Toulouse, Sadly Alan passed away peacefully on 5th of April after a very short illness, borne with bravery and great dignity.

Alan started in the trade in the Miners Welfare Institute in 1976. He then ran a pub called Springbank Cottage in Maryhill for two years in the early nineties. He joined Broughton Brewery in sales in 1992. In 1995 Broughton went into receivership so in 1997, when I heard the new owners had made Alan redundant, I arranged to meet him. That meeting confirmed my view that Alan was ideal for Caledonian. He started immediately, taking on the West of Scotland and that started the strong bond between him and Caledonian that was with Alan to the end.

Although he started in sales and his role always had sales in it, his publican background brought a huge empathy with the Scottish licensed trade and, as a result, he developed quality and cellar training for Caledonian in Scotland and as far as Kent.

Over the years, Monday nights at Caledonian became Alan's



domain. He has educated several thousand people in the art of the cellar and enthused even the most die-hard students. His courses were renowned and have truly been fundamental foundations for the success that cask beer has enjoyed over the last fifteen years north of the Border.

The Caledonian Beer Festival was instrumental in Caledonian's growth and by the time it finished in 2004 Alan was in charge of the huge temporary cellar. With his Caledonian hat on, Alan was possibly at his proudest at the Great British Beer Festival.

He loved the crucial but sometimes combative liaison role with the CAMRA bar manager.

Alan loved his Caledonian mobile bar on a trailer, with its refrigerated units and state of the art dispense equipment. It was the first mobile bar to achieve Cask Marque accreditation. One year he took it down to GBBF and proudly displayed his Cask Marque Plaque and Certificate of Excellence on the front of the bar. At that point a CAMRA bigwig came past, objected to the plaque being displayed and promptly removed and walked off with it.

Alan yelled after the CAMRA man (in a thick Scottish accent) to give it back. When the CAMRA chap ignored him, Alan started to run after him.

The CAMRA man looked really startled and also started to run. Like a scene from a Benny Hill show, Alan sprinted after this guy. Beer drinkers flattened themselves against the walls as this pint-sized Scottish demon streamed through the crowds, rugby-tackled the guy to the floor and wrestled his plaque back. It stayed for the duration of the festival!

What is not surprising in that story is Alan's passion, but those of you who knew him could not imagine I would be telling a story that involved Alan running! However, not everything "ran" smoothly for Alan as he once fell UP the stairs at the Christmas party and ended up in hospital - I guess it could have been worse if he had fallen down them! There was also an occasion when Alan took a tumble at Caley and even Alan saw the funny side of it. He had a small group on a tour and had paused just outside the hop room. This was two days from the end of the cut off date for a blemish free Health and Safety year at the brewery. Incredibly Alan was briefing the people on his tour on Health and Safety when he just fell over and broke his leg!

There is a rumour that even though Alan was dedicated to Caledonian he did enjoy a pint of Tennents lager!

The final memory I have of Alan is of his smile on the last day I saw him. He handed me three wooden spoons - one for Scotland rugby 2012 and one each for 2013 and 2014!

Stephen Crawley
Managing Director
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The Interview

WITH JOHN HENDERSON OF SCOTTISH BORDERS BREWERY

POV: So John, what was it that made you decide to start a brewery?

JH: Well, it wasn't quite something that came to me at the bottom of a pint glass, but it wasn't far off either ...

POV: Did you have any experience of brewing or was it just a passion and a love of real ale that sparked the idea of making it a business?

JH: Six years ago I knew very little about brewing or real ale. But it was trying to figure out a way to save the family farm in the Borders that got me into it. We were looking for ways to diversify and, although it seems obvious in retrospect, it took a long time to work out that we grew barley and barley made beer. Then, the more I looked into microbrewing, the more I was surprised that so many "local" microbreweries shipped in their ingredients, and particularly their malt, from miles away. It didn't seem to make any sense, particularly in an age where people have an increasing interest in local food and local sourcing. That's how our plough-to-pint ethos was born.

POV: You are now just under six months into your second year. Can you highlight some of the highs and lows experienced over that period?

JH: There have been very few lows, really. Obviously, if something goes wrong in the brewery - something like a chiller failing - it can be pretty depressing for a while. And like so many other breweries, we never seem to have enough casks. But we've had such an amazing first year that I really can't complain. I could do with a bit of sleep though nobody told me quite how incessant this brewing malarkey can be!

POV: You have enjoyed excellent press and media exposure. How significant has that been to the success of the business?

JH: Very. My background was in advertising, so I enjoy that side of things. Creating our giant pint-shaped crop circle, for example, was definitely a highlight of last year. But really, it's just about basic marketing and getting your story out there. You can have the best product in the world, but if nobody knows about it what's the point?

POV: Jedburgh is the closest main town, but of course you are not near Jedburgh. Where exactly does the brewery lie?

JH: The brewery is in an old farm steading on the banks of the River Teviot, just below the village of Lanton. It's a pretty idyllic setting in the summer, but a tad cold come winter ... there's nothing like trying to de-frost a cask washer when it's 10 below!

POV: How many are in your team?

JH: There are five of us in all. Aside from myself, there's Peter Sharp our brewer, Thomas Graham who helps out on the production side, Steven Craig our drayman, and Gabby Morrison who handles our sales. It's a close-knit team and everybody lives within seven miles of the brewery - just round the corner in rural terms!

POV: You currently have five beers in your portfolio. Are they all regulars and what is the frequency of their brews?

JH: We brew three times a week at the moment and usually that will mean Game Bird, Foxy Blonde and one other. We try to make sure we always have our five core beers on at all times, as different pubs all have their different favourites.

POV: Will you be introducing seasonal/one-off brews?



JH: Last autumn, we created Hop Scotch as our first one-off. It was made using common hops that were already growing in our garden and meant that every single one of our ingredients came from within 500 yards of the brewery. Typically, it sold out, but we didn't have enough hops to make any more! It will be back next autumn though.

Beyond that, we are looking to use other local ingredients in our one-offs. Heavy Nettle should have made an appearance by the time people are reading this and we're toying with a few other possibilities as well ...

POV: And what are your plans for the future?

JH: To survive our second year! Seriously, though, we'd like to add to our range, keep promoting our plough-to-pint story and perhaps introduce some sort of visitor centre at the brewery that would allow more people to come and see us.

POV: With so many hurdles being placed in the way of brewers and pubs in this economic climate, what is the secret of success?

JH: Good beer, plain and simple. I'm a firm believer that the cask beer experience in a pub is something that no amount of money can ever buy you in a supermarket.

And I think if pubs are to survive, they need to capitalise on that fact. It's great to see so many landlords now starting to appreciate this and so many customers, young and old, responding to it. I think the work of various campaigning groups like CAMRA has also made a huge difference.

POV: Finally, what does John Henderson do when he is not up to his neck in barley?

JH: He spends long overdue time with his wife and daughter!

Thanks for speaking to POV John and all the best for the future.

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Scottish Real Ale Festival 2012



Photo by: Malcolm McLean

Hi, I'm Alice Waltham and I'm the staffing officer for the Festival which is ten years old this year. To celebrate our birthday we will be moving to a larger venue at The Edinburgh Corn Exchange at Slateford. You can reach the venue very easily on Lothian buses 4, 35 and 44 or from Slateford Railway Station. It is right next to the big Asda.

The festival is run entirely by volunteers and has a wonderful

friendly atmosphere. We will be opening to the public from Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 June. We will have a huge selection with over 150 beers to choose from, but we hope to be busy so please come early to get the best selection.

We are looking for help from volunteers from Sunday 24 June to Sunday 1 July. The volunteering form is on the website: www.sraf.org.uk or email me at staffing@scottishrealalefestival.org.uk. I really recommend volunteering for the festival, especially if you haven't worked at one before. It is hard work but really great fun. You get to meet interesting people with a shared passion and I have made some fantastic friends through the festival.

To celebrate our tenth birthday, here are my ten top tips for a great festival:

1. Volunteer to work. Working the busy sessions gives you a great buzz and you will meet some lovely people that you may find become lifelong friends.

2. If you are visiting as a customer, come early. You will get the best selection of beers on Thursday afternoon.
3. Check out the website www.sraf.org.uk in advance. There will be details of the beer list online, so you can plan what you would like to try. You can also follow us on Twitter (twitter.com/SRAF) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/ScottishRealAleFestival) to get more details in advance.
4. We're delighted that the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) will be holding their Scottish regional competition at our festival. We will also be judging and announcing the CAMRA Champion Beer of Scotland during the festival. Look out for the results if you would like to try some of the winners.
5. The volunteers are real enthusiasts, so try asking for their recommendations. You are unlikely to be disappointed.
6. Pace yourself. Drink halves so you can try more different beers. Remember that you can come back to later sessions for free with this year's glass, so there is no need to try everything in one session! Drink plenty of water which will be available free.
7. Enjoy the food which will be on sale throughout.
8. Pick up a memento of your visit from our stall. We will have a wide selection of CAMRA products - t-shirts, books etc.
9. If you need to leave before 10pm, you may be able to take a carry-out of your favourite beer to drink at home. Ask at the bar.
10. Bring your friends, even if they don't normally drink real ale or cider. We think that most people will enjoy the atmosphere and find something new that they really love. We hope to see you there.

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TAX - everybody pays it, but some people pay more than others


Those of us who drink most of our beer in pubs have now come to dread Budget Day. The previous Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling, declared war on pub goers in his first budget by announcing that beer duty would go up two percentage points above the rate of inflation and this has been carried on by his successor, George Osborne. In those four years it has risen by a staggering 35%. An even more damning statistic is that, despite the fact that we consume only 13% of the beer drunk in the European Union, we pay 40% of the beer duty. Only in a country like this would the government attempt to tax a product like beer, where 86% of what we consume is produced in this country, whereas wine, of which only 1% of what we consume is produced here, benefits from a far smaller tax. The government, or at least the Treasury, does not see that taxing beer into oblivion is ultimately doomed to failure. It does not seem to realise that it is the economics of the madhouse to drive up beer prices in pubs, thereby discouraging

people from going to the pub and spending their money there. Instead, that money will be spent in supermarkets because the supermarkets pile it high and sell it cheap. That exodus means more pub closures and more people on the dole collecting benefits. The tipping point has surely been reached where raising beer duty above inflation is no longer cost effective and actually means that less revenue is being generated for the Treasury. Perhaps the very clever people who inhabit the policy wing of the Treasury can see that, in the same way that they claim they can raise more money from people who earn over £150,000 by lowering their tax rate by 10%. If they stop raising beer duty by ridiculous amounts thereby reducing demand and instead merely halted the escalator, perhaps the tax take will go up. Politicians of every hue and legislature claim that they want to tackle the problems, perceived or real, of the so-called

booze culture in this country. As beer drinking, especially in pubs, declines, alcohol-related diseases increase - cold hard logic tells us that the pub is not part of the problem, it is part of the solution. One of the leading authorities on alcohol-related diseases in this country, Dr. Nick Sheron of Southampton General Hospital, has stated that 95% of the patients he sees do the majority of their drinking at home. Is it too much to ask of our elected representatives that they, just for once, take off their blinkers and actually research the subjects they pontificate on? Is there nothing we can do about it? Well, there is and it is actually quite straightforward - what is required is for 100,000 people to sign the e-petition by going to the CAMRA website www.camra.org.uk/saveyourpint. It will take you no more than a minute. Even if you take nothing else from this article, do please sign the petition and encourage your

beer drinking friends to do the same. You do not need to be a member of CAMRA to do so, just someone who is concerned at the price of your pint. When there are 100,000 signatories, there will be a debate in parliament. Will it make a difference? Well it might not, but it certainly won't make a difference if we all sit on our hands and do nothing. **MAKE YOUR SIGNATURE COUNT, NOW!**
Colin Valentine
CAMRA National Chairman





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NOT-SO-SUNNY (or drinkable) OBAN

Our latest rail adventure took us with SRPS on a day trip to Oban (ok, sometimes you have to think small). The early start of 06:11 from Waverley didn't help, but we had the trip on our dedicated fifty year old carriages to look forward to. Progressing through heavy rain, we saw the "romantic" scenery that Walter Scott so mythologised.

When we go on these trips we usually have some real ale in 4 pint draught packs to enjoy on the return leg. On this occasion, we decided to risk it and get some beer from Cuan Mor brewery in Oban instead of a pub back home. Oban is very lucky to have a distillery and brewery right beside each other and in a nice location. Off the train we got and marched along the dreich Promenade to the brewpub. As we entered, we noticed that every table was set out for meals, with only seats at the bar or outside for drinkers.

Never mind, we opted for halves of Kilt Lifter & Fair Puggled. Frustratingly, both were flat, warm and stale. Hmm, maybe try again later; it is only 11.30 after all.

Once we had lunched at The Waterfront Restaurant, where bottles of Cuan Mor come in at a hefty £4.25, we noticed that their public bar had draught Cuan Mor. Hey, might be better. Well it was, but not by much; basically warm beer lying in a glass. Getting a bit dispirited now, we set off to The Lorne Bar which says it has the best ale in town, which it may well have but on this occasion it was only Deuchars. Now don't get me wrong, this is one of the all time great beers, but not what we were looking for in Oban. Giving it a miss, we found the Rowantree Hotel, ah, Deuchars again. Oh well, on to Coasters, which had no beer. Onto Markie Dans and at last very drinkable



Kilt Lifter. Trouble was that Scotland was in the process of not winning a football match and it was packed, so we returned to Cuan Mor brewpub and it was now nice enough to sit outside. We did ask to see the brewery but were told that we couldn't, nice! Let's see if the beer has improved in the afternoon - well yes, but only marginally.

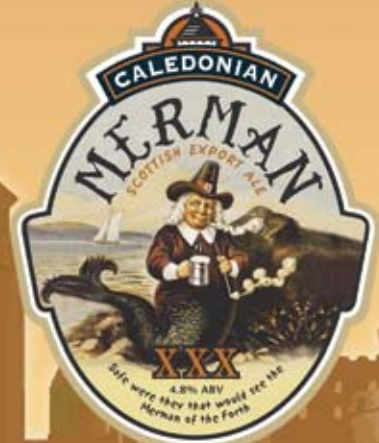
Having failed to secure beer for the train ride home, we managed to pick up some expensive bottles of Fyne Ales from a deli on the Promenade. All in all, a severely disappointing sojourn to a very busy tourist town, where good beer seems to be in short supply. Such a shame, customers deserve better; it wouldn't take much effort. Still, the train trip was good.

Jim Darroch

LOOK OUT FOR THE NEW EDITION OF OUR BRANCH REAL ALE GUIDE OUT LATER THIS SUMMER

An all-new edition of our popular local guide will be out this summer. Priced at around £3.50 it will give readers essential information on over 350 real ale outlets in Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders. Whether you wish to know which pubs have beer gardens, which do food, which take dogs or simply what beers are served, then this is the guide for you. Look out for it in selected pubs or check for details of when it's out, by visiting our branch website www.edinburghcamra.org.uk or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/edinburghcamra.

It will also be available for sale through our national website www.camra.org.uk/shop.



Summer Beers



CALEDONIANBEER.COM

PUB NEWS . . .

Ed - I mentioned in my editorial that the vast amount of information which will make up the new edition of our branch Real Ale Guide is currently being used for that purpose. Therefore Capital Quaffing, Beyond the Bypass and Borders Booze News will not appear in that format for this issue. That doesn't mean that there is nothing to write about however, so here goes!

Edinburgh

April saw the "30 Days of IPA" a festival of IPAs and charitable events organised by Caledonian Heritable. A number of breweries submitted their IPAs and some, such as Caley, brewed a special solely for the festival. Its Deuchars Imperial IPA at 5.2% ABV drew particular interest as did Worthington's White Shield, brewed in draught by Molson Coors for the festival. A gala dinner was held at **Pear Tree House** on 28th April to celebrate the month-long festival and to announce the winners of "Best IPA of the Festival". George Fyvie of Pear Tree House said "The whole festival was a huge success and will be a yearly event with other similar events coming up throughout the year. The dinner went amazingly well, with an excellent turnout".

The awards were:

"Best IPA"

First:

Caledonian Deuchars IPA,

Second:

Broughton Ales Clipper,

Third:

Caledonian Deuchars Imperial IPA.

"IPA Personality of the Year" went to Craig Frod of Caledonian Brewery.

Ed - look out for Fyne Ales "IPA Project" throughout the summer and also Tryst "Hop Trials".

The Ale House in Clerk Street is giving CAMRA members a 30p discount off every pint.

Halfway House in Fleshmarket Close gives members 20p off every pint. The following pubs are added to our list of those selling real ale:

The Southern Bar in South Clerk Street is now a Fuller Thomson pub and has been offering some interesting and little-seen ales. **Carters Bar** in Morrison Street is selling Deuchars IPA and a guest, as is the **Compass Bar** in Queen Charlotte Street, where Fyne's Jarl was going down a treat when we called. Trendy **Frankenstein** on George IV Bridge has three handpumps dispensing mainly Caley beers.

Heriot's Rugby Club at Goldenacre is fully licensed and serves real ale. It's open to all on match days, Thursday training evenings and Friday jazz nights. **The Blackhall Lounge** in Hillhouse Road is a new outlet for us, but apparently has been serving Deuchars IPA for several years! It was in superb condition when we called.

It was disappointing to see **Tass** on the High Street close. However it has reopened after refurbishment as **No 1 High Street** and the good news is that the real ales remain.

The Old Golf Tavern on the north side of the Meadows underwent a major refurb during the winter and has upped its handpumps to four. **Bierex** has been renamed **1 Grange Road** and is still selling real ales from Cairngorm on both pumps. **The Illicit Still** at Tolcross is now **Ventoux**. **The Old Chain Pier** at Newhaven, which has been closed since last year, will hopefully be open by the time you read this. **Hector's** in Stockbridge was selling Adnam's Sole Star, a pale amber ale at 2.7% ABV. Very nice for lunchtime drinking said one customer. Is this the lowest ABV on the

market? Outside the city, **Mrs Formans** in Musselburgh has new licensees. It has two hand pumps, one mostly dedicated to Stewart beers and the other to guests. Whilst continuing to focus on food, drinkers are made very welcome. And right next door is the **Levenhall Arms**.

There's good news about the **Mason's Arms** at Belhaven. Michelle & George Kelso of **The Linton** at East Linton have taken on the lease and it's now called the **Feathers**. Run by Michelle's daughter Rachel and her partner, it will continue to have two guests and a Belhaven ale. It will close on a Monday and Tuesday. At the **First & Last** pub at Burnmouth, expect to see real cider appearing regularly.

Down at Lauder the **Black Bull** is looking for a new tenant, but the hotel still has three guest ales which you can try in three third of a pint measures. **The Clovenfords**

Hotel, Clovenfords has new licensees and a new beer range, Clovenfords Ale brewed by Tetleys and a guest beer.

The **Cross Keys Inn** in Selkirk which has been closed for some time is back on the market, raising hopes that it might reopen. Word is out that the **Gordon Arms** at Mountbenger in the Yarrow Valley is reopening. Whether it will have real ale, time will tell. In Peebles the **Neidpath Inn** is serving real ale again. There is positive news on the **Crook Inn** at Tweedsmuir. The community has the option to buy, but must raise the agreed asking price of £160,000. Look out for its fund-raising campaign on www.savethecrook.org.uk And finally, how about this for a great response from the **Corstophine Inn** to a CAMRA member commenting on no real ale being on. "Someone had been in and drunk it" - brilliant!

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THE CASE AGAINST THE USE OF RETURN TRAYS

Have you ever awakened with an upset stomach or a touch of diarrhoea after a few beers the previous night and thought, "I must have got an iffy pint last night or maybe it was the kebab I got on the way home"? Well, it might be that your upset stomach was nothing to do with the brewer's skilfully crafted real ale, gently going through its secondary fermentation process in the cellar or the culinary prowess of your local fast food outlet, but all due to how your pint got from the cask in the cellar to your glass, and the personal hygiene standards of the barperson who served your drink. Of course, it is not only stomach problems that are at stake, as colds and flu can also be transmitted by contact with contaminated surfaces such as those that can exist on the outside of your glass. The problem I am referring to, of course, is the return tray method of real ale dispense. When this dispense method is used, any spillage of the beer into the drip tray is siphoned back into the beer line supplying the beer pump from the cask in the cellar. A one-way valve should be incorporated to prevent the spilt beer from running back into the cask, as it is illegal to return spillage (or slops) to the cask. A few pubs in Edinburgh still use the 'traditional' Scottish tall font method of dispense which can return spilt beer into the customers' glass, depending upon the pouring actions of the barperson. The Scottish tall fonts are gradually disappearing from our pubs, as spare parts are now proving difficult to obtain. So, how can I recognise that I'm getting spilt beer returned to my glass, I hear you say? Well, the Scottish tall font is obvious, but there is a catch! If the barperson pours your beer with the valve handle turned towards you, then you are only getting fresh beer straight from the cask. However, if the barperson pours your beer with the handle pointing to him/her, then you are getting a blend of spilt beer from the return tray and fresh beer from the cask. Hand pumped real ale is slightly more complicated. If you frequent

a pub where you see the barperson pumping several squirts of beer into the 'drip' tray before presenting your glass to the swan neck for filling, and/or allowing a copious amount of beer to overflow from your glass, then you can be pretty sure that a return tray is in use. Some pubs using hand pumps have a more refined method of pouring your pint and it may be necessary to have a quick peek over the top of the counter to see what's below. If you see a stainless steel 'drip' tray with piping coming out of the bottom, then again you can be sure that a return tray is in use.

Why do publicans go to all of this bother? As with most things in life, it is all down to money! Real ale is a living product that continues to go through a secondary fermentation process in the pub cellar. This fermentation generates CO₂, which keeps the beer fresh in its cask. However, as soon as a cask is broached and the first beer poured, air enters the cask to replace the beer drawn off and the oxidation process begins. There is now only a finite time during which the beer must be sold, if it is to be in good condition in the customer's glass. This is approximately four days for normal strength beers and a little longer for higher gravity ales. If the beer is not sold within these timescales, the beer will have lost much of its condition and may appear 'flat' in the glass. Also, the oxidation process will be well under way which can seriously affect the flavour of your pint. At this stage, a good publican should be looking to dispose of any surplus beer left in the cask as waste, but some will use return trays to attempt to bring back some 'life' into tired beer, thereby reducing their ullage and increasing their profit from that cask. Return trays can be found in several pubs within Edinburgh and its environs, often, but not always, in the multi-ale small pub company outlets and in some of the small one-pub operators. I have never encountered them in the larger pub operating companies such as JD Wetherspoon or M&B's Nicholson's brand. Personally, I have never found return trays in use in Scotland's other major city and it could be argued that the real ale quality in Glasgow is generally of a higher quality to that found in Edinburgh - letters to the Editor, please! Also, although reasonably common in parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, I am unaware of the use of return trays below a line drawn between the Mersey and the Humber.

So, what can publicans do to reduce wastage and allow them to remove their return trays? For a start, they can reduce the number of hand pumps on the bar or gear the number of real ales on offer to match customer demand throughout the week. This will ensure that all of the beer on sale will be sold within the time constraints imposed by the need for quality - after all, quality is much better than quantity! They can order their real ales in smaller casks. To a large extent, this has already happened as most publicans now order their real ale in firkins (72 pints); the days of barrels and hogsheads are long gone in the vast majority of real ale outlets. But they can go further to ensure that the beer is sold in four days by ordering pins (36 pints) or by buying beer in containers that are akin to the bag in the boxes used by some brewers and by many wine and cider producers. The main advantage of the bag in the box is that, as the contents are drawn off, the bag collapses and prevents the ingress of any air, so preventing the oxidation process starting and thereby prolonging the on-sale life of the beer.

There is no good reason why return trays should be used in the dispense of real ale. It does nothing to help the quality of the real ale and could have implications for customers' health. Many good pubs in Edinburgh, some of them multi-award winning, do not find they need return trays to make a decent living.

As an individual, you can bring the matter to the attention of any publicans using the devices and tell them of your unease over this matter. If you feel strongly you can contact your local authority and register your concern. You can of course vote with your feet and support the real ale pubs that don't use return trays - the others will soon get the message!

Ron Elder

The Volunteer Arms

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The Volunteer Arms

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THE CASE FOR THE USE OF RETURN TRAYS

I'm Kevin McGhee and I've been the licensee at the Diggers (Athletic Arms) in Edinburgh since 2005. My deputy Rab Hay has worked in the industry for sixteen years and has experience of using tall fonts in the Bow Bar and Cloisters before joining the Diggers in 2006. Rab helped me to compile this article.

We like to drink different real ales from all around Britain because we enjoy the different tastes. We also like to frequent bars that serve a good pint that has been kept in good condition and served by someone who has the same passion for this marvellous product as we do. Tall fonts have been used in the Diggers for longer than any of our regulars remember; they were used to dispense the magical McEwans 80/- (when it was at its best) for which the pub is famous. At the Diggers we have eight tall fonts and two hand pulls. We feel that the art of pouring the perfect pint in the most hygienic way possible is best achieved using the tall fonts, but only if you have been trained properly. It is harder and more time consuming to train staff to use them, but it is worth it to have well-trained members of staff who can gauge the condition of the beer and dispense that perfect pint.

Our Aitken taps have separate return trays so there is no cross contamination of beers. When pouring we can either draw beer straight from the cask or a mix from the cask and return tray. Staff know only to use the tray when the pub is busy so that the beer does not lose condition by sitting in the tray too long and importantly the amount of beer from the return tray never forms more than a quarter of the pint. It is impossible to serve just ale from the return tray as fresh beer from the cask line is required to draw the beer from the tray; by overfilling the glass we can ensure a perfect head on every pint. However staff are also trained not to thrash the beer and create excessive overflow.

When pouring, we tilt the glass and angle our hands so any beer overflow does not come into contact with the pourer. Hand sanitizer is there for use at all times and staff are rigorously instructed to wash their hands as often as possible.

Kevin McGhee & Rab Hay



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Brewery News

Alechemy

It's fitting that Alechemy Brewery should head our Brewery News section as it's our newest brewery. It's a ten barrel plant located at Brucefield Industrial Estate at Livingston. It started its first brews in March and the beers were launched to an enthusiastic reception at Cloisters in Edinburgh in April.

The beers at time of writing are:

Five Sisters 4.3% ABV A rich dark amber beer combining British malts with a rich herbal American Chinook hop with a hint of citrus.

Cairnapple 4.1% ABV A light IPA with a floral aroma and a lingering citrus taste.

Cockleroy Black IPA An intriguing juxtaposition of dark malt colours and the full citrus and floral aromas of a traditional IPA.

Expect more beers to follow.

The owner and brewer is James Davies, a member of the Scottish Craft Brewers. www.alechemybrewing.com

We wish Alechemy every success.



Barney's Beer - Edinburgh gets its second brewery

Barney's Beer has been brewed at the tiny brewpub at Behind The Wall in Falkirk since November 2010. However, this summer Andrew Barnett (aka Barney) is planning to relocate to Edinburgh and open a new microbrewery at Summerhall, near the Meadows, the former site of the Dick Vet College but more interestingly the Summerhall brewery (1720 to 1909). The brewery was demolished to make way for the college; the photo shows its chimney being knocked down. (We're grateful to the R(D)SVS archive, University of Edinburgh, for permission to print.)

The new brewery will form part of the Summerhall Cultural Centre, a buzzing year-round home for theatre and gallery spaces, libraries, educational and research programmes, artist and film studios. Brewery open days should become a regular feature and a bar situated a few yards away will be the brewery tap. Its main beers are currently Good Ordinary Pale Ale and Red Rye. A number of new beers are planned when the new brewery opens. We hope the move to Edinburgh is problem-free and we wish the new Barney's all the best.



Barney's
BEER

Belhaven

With Belhaven IPA selling well, the brewery is certainly on a run, with new brew Belhaven Black, already out in keg, due out in cask form in June. Selected Mitchells & Butlers pubs in Edinburgh were selling it for a short period in April, so some readers may have already tried it. Belhaven tasting notes say "Getting back to 'Black'....using Scottish grown barley, malt and water drawn from the Brewery well, this deliciously balanced, full bodied stout offers a rich roasted coffee aroma with a smooth finish with lingering hints of dark chocolate and liquorice. Easy to drink, this beer pairs perfectly with ploughman's, cheese or oysters." Let's hope it makes the Scottish Real Ale Festival.



Broughton Ales

Expect to see new beers over the course of the year and beyond. The latest brew is Dark Dunter 5.0% ABV. It has oatmeal and chocolate aromas, complemented by dark roasted malty flavours and a rich aftertaste. It takes its name from old Border folklore, Dunter being the name given to evil goblins who preyed on travellers.



Caledonian

As predicted by POV in our winter issue, a Scottish brewed 2.8% ABV cask ale is now on the market. Called 2Point8, it's a copper coloured ale with smooth maltiness in the nose, balanced by a spicy herbal bitterness. Designed to keep below the duty threshold, but will it catch on? Time will tell.



Ales and Rails by Caledonian Brewery

Caledonian Brewery is right on track with the Flying Scotsman Premium Bitter celebrating its first birthday. Caledonian connects, of course, with the age of steam in a number of ways. George Lorimer and Robert Clark purchased the Slateford Road site due to the proximity of the railway in the Damhead Estate in Shandon, which at that time was on the outskirts of the city. When the brewery was completed in 1869, it was named after the Caledonian Railway line being built directly behind and which would be completed the following year. When first opened, the Caledonian Main Line was the only railway line from the south to serve both Edinburgh and Glasgow, via Carlisle and Carstairs. The 'Caley' not only had its own brew house but wells up to 500 feet deep, maltings, cooperage, kilns, cellars and stables for the dray horses, not to mention its own railway sidings! You can see from the picture why it was so convenient to ship much of the beer brewed to England. Lorimer's Best Scotch became one of the most popular beers in the North East. However, the next 60 years saw the brewery suffer from lack of investment, partly

THE CASK & BARREL - F



Photo: pubinatube.com

QUALITY PUB AT THE FOOT OF BROUGHTON

because expansion of the site was physically impossible. Ironically, this proved very fortunate indeed as Caledonian's direct fired open coppers are still used to this day. Although less economic than their modern counterparts, the direct fire ensures a vigorous and turbulent boil whilst the open design allows a free flow of air above the boil itself. This oxygenates the wort, encouraging the flavour and colour production during this sterilising stage prior to fermentation. The open copper design also eliminates the stewed over-condensed volatile taints resulting in the distinctive clean malt type and hop variety characteristics found only in Caledonian ales. Pardon the pun, but this provides a great platform for our new Premium Bitter Flying Scotsman, the officially licensed beer which uses northern barley and robust southern hops, providing first class refreshment from Edinburgh to London and beyond, so get on board!



DemonBrew

David Whyte writes - My four regular beers are: Firehead 3.9% ABV Pale session ale with loads of New Zealand hops! Demon Black 4.4% ABV Black beer with loads of roast barley and New Zealand hops!

Redline 4.3% ABV Amber/bronze coloured bitter. Pacific Kick 5.4% ABV Copper coloured, bursting with, you guessed it . . . New Zealand hops!!!

I love New Zealand hops, very fresh and zesty. Less harsh than some of the American varieties!! Some of those used are Pacific Gem, Pacific Jade and Motueka.

Demon Dark 6.6% ABV was the first beer to sell out at the Larbert Beer Festival; this has to be brewed again!!!

I'm hoping or is that hopping(!) to brew my spiced wheat beer, Summer Storm, that was so popular last year. I'm also hoping to start bottling this summer.



Innis & Gunn

Sales of their "speciality" beers matured in different barrels such as rum, whisky and Irish whiskey, are really taking off, both at home and abroad. Additionally their draught Innis & Gunn Original, though keg and not cask, is finding favour in many pubs. With such brewing skills, it is hoped that one day we'll be singing the praises of an Innis & Gunn cask beer.



Knops

Robert Knops continues to focus on his core beers, but is also running brewing courses. Usually on a Saturday, they start at 1pm and go on until 4-5pm. Food and beer are supplied. Costs £30. To find out about them and to book a place e-mail Robert at info@knopsbeer.com.



Scottish Borders Brewery - See The Interview on page 5

Stewart Brewing

Jo Stewart writes - Loads of exciting developments as always at Stewart Brewing. In February we held the second round of the 'Battle of the Brewers' competition hosted at the Cask and Barrel Southside. The beer to be brewed was the best Black IPA and the challenger was Harviestoun. The event was a great success, with a sell-out crowd of one hundred and fifty raising over £750 for charity. Stewart's beer was victorious on the night. Round three against Cairngorm was scheduled for late May. (Ed - too late for POV. We're sure the best beer won!)



Two new brews were launched in April and early May. The fantastically hoppy Zymic, 3.5% ABV and a triple hopped Pale Ale 'Radical Road' was a 6.4% ABV bottled beer. Our collaboration project with Heriott Watt and the ICBD (International Centre for Brewing and Distilling) is in its second year and we are working with a group of brewing students to launch a new beer under 'Natural Selection Brewing' in July this year. It's a really fun and creative project allowing students to get hands-on experience.

And finally, the long awaited new brewery! Well the new site has been purchased and with planning permission now granted our new 30barrel brewery is scheduled to be built and installed this summer, giving Stewart's room at last and the space we need to grow and extend our product range.

For all the details of our launch events, Battle of the Brewers and brewery move keep up to date with us on our Facebook page 'Stewart Brewing' or follow us on Twitter @stewartbrewing.

Ed - continuing our good wishes, let's also wish Jo & Steve and the gang all the best with their move when it comes.

Tempest

There are some superb beers coming from Tempest both in cask and in bottle and in keeping with Gavin's habit of ringing the changes, POV has been struggling to keep up with them! At our Pub of the Year presentation to Cobbles Inn, we particularly enjoyed Long White Gold 5.6% ABV a New Zealand inspired dry-hopped golden ale. Brave New World in bottle is going down a treat both at home and abroad and look out also for Double Cresta Stout their current (at going to print) bottling. The brewery is working to capacity and Gavin is on the look-out for larger premises.



Thistly Cross

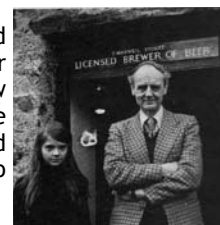
You will have read in the press about the ridiculous situation that has developed between our local cider maker and HMRC. Some time ago, Thistly Cross decided to mature some of their cider in old whisky casks. HMRC had decreed that this version of cider is 'made wine', and was demanding back tax for the cider already produced by this method and of course the higher rate of taxation for any cider of this type produced in the future. However, on appeal, it was ruled that Peter's cider "did not break with the definition of cider - ie colour and flavour well within the recognised natural characteristics and corresponded with long matured cider with a full malo lactic flavour."

Look out for Thistly Cross's real/cask cider Jaggy Thistle. As we go to print, Peter is deciding on new designs for his labels and we look forward to seeing the final choices.



Traquair

The brewery continues to focus on its bottled beers. Catherine Maxwell Stewart was our interviewee in our winter issue. Here we show a photo of Catherine as a child standing beside her father Peter Maxwell Stuart. Catherine used to help her dad with the brewing. Thanks go to Catherine for allowing us to use the photo.



FREE HOUSE



STREET, EDINBURGH

Cask and Barrel (Southside)

24–26 West Preston Street, Edinburgh EH8 9PZ

0131 667 0856 – casksouthside@btconnect.com

In May we celebrated our second birthday, and what an eventful two years it has been. In 2011 after being open for only nine months, CAMRA awarded us third place in the City of Edinburgh Pub of the Year Awards. This remarkable achievement was capped in 2012, when we were awarded first place in the City Awards and third in the South-East Scotland Overall Pub of the Year Awards!!!



The Cask and Barrel (Southside) is Victorian in style, with antique bar mirrors and period prints on the walls. It is a comfortable and spacious room with a high ceiling which is bordered by a bold cornice. The large horseshoe bar is backed by an ornate gantry of turned woodwork and scrolls which is fronted by smoked glass.

During the past two years our ever-increasing and diverse clientele has appreciated more than five hundred guest ales from breweries nationwide. Along with our three house ales, Highland's Orkney Best, Stewart's 80/- and Caledonian's Deuchars IPA, there is always a wide selection of ale on offer.



Matt and the rest of the management would like to thank the customers who have given their support during these two quick years. Thanks also to all who helped with refurbishment and initial set up of the bar. Lastly a special thanks to all our staff, they have played their own particular part, individually and collectively, in helping us to make our mark. Cheers!



Cask and Barrel South Side



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Houston Brewing Company

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Established by Carl Wengel in 1997, the brewery is attached to the Fox & Hounds pub and restaurant. Brewery tours include dinner and tastings. Houston deliver throughout Britain via a network of distributors, but also direct. Polypins, bottles and gift packs are for sale via their website.



Wetherspoon Sponsor of our Saturday session

Founded as a single pub in 1979 by Tim Martin, Wetherspoon now owns over 700 pubs, with 51 of those in Scotland. The chain champions cask ale, low prices, long opening hours and no music.



Stewart Brewing Sponsor of the SRAF 2012 glassware

Stewart Brewing has operated at Loanhead just outside the city by-pass since 2004. They brew six regular ales and Edinburgh Gold was a worthy winner of the SIBA Scotland Supreme Champion award in 2007.



Traditional Scottish Ales Sponsor of our Friday session

Traditional Scottish Ales is a division of VC2, the dynamic Scottish drinks brand with an extensive and impressive portfolio of drinks brands, including the iconic Stiffys Shots. 1488 Whisky Ale won the Scottish Food and Drink Excellence Awards in 2006.



Ayr Brewing Company Sponsor of our staff polo shirts

The Ayr Brewing Company is a 5 Barrel Micro Brewery situated at the Glen Park Hotel in the heart of Rabbin Burns country. It currently produces between 20 and 40 casks of ale a week and supplies pubs in Ayrshire, Glasgow, Edinburgh and South West Scotland. The brewery's Jolly Beggars, a best bitter, took Bronze in the SIBA competition held at the 2007 Scottish Real Ale Festival.



Harviestoun Brewery Sponsor of our Trade & Press Session

Having started life in a barn in Dollar in 1985 Harviestoun now operates a state-of-the-art brewery in Alva. It was bought by Caledonian Brewery in 2006 but is now independent following the take-over of Caledonian by Scottish & Newcastle in 2008. It is particularly known for its Bitter & Twisted, CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain in 2003, as well as its superb cask lager Schiehallion.



Orkney Brewery Sponsor of our staff t-shirts

Part of Sinclair Breweries, Orkney Brewery was the star of CAMRA's 2010 Champion Beer of Scotland competition, winning both Gold and Silver awards with Raven Ale and Red McGregor respectively. The brewery has expanded its operations to include the Atlas brands that were formerly brewed at Kinlochleven.



Fyne Ales Sponsor of our Thursday session

Beautifully situated at the top of Loch Fyne, The Fyne Ales Brewery was set up in 2001 using the redundant milking parlour in the traditional farm buildings at Achadunan, Cairndow. They brew five regular ales and in October 2002, within nine months of starting production, were awarded the Scottish regional gold awards from SIBA for two of their beers, the beginning of a long list of awards.



Cairngorm Brewery Company Sponsor of our Website

The Cairngorm Brewery Company, established in 2001, is situated in the village of Aviemore within the Cairngorms National Park. They recently upgraded to a 20-barrel brewery producing eight regular and a number of seasonal beers which together have brought many awards. Among



these the accolade of 2009 SIBA Supreme Champion Beer of the Year went to Black Gold.

Sulwath Brewers Sponsor of our Festival Stewards

Scotland's most southerly brewery was established in 1996 and is now based on the main street in Castle Douglas, where a visit to the Visitor Centre is a must if you are near to Scotland's Food Town. They brew six regular ales and were delighted when Black Galloway won silver at 2010's National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester, to add to a long list of similar successes.



The Highland Brewing Company Sponsor of our Beer Cooling System

Brewing began at the Swannay Brewery in Orkney in 2006 and production was increased only a year later. A visitor centre, cafe and 20 barrel plant are planned. Among past favourites at the festival are Scapa Special, Orkney Best, and Dark Munro.



Strathaven Ales Sponsor of the CAMRA Products Stall

Strathaven Ales are produced at Craigmill Brewery in South Lanarkshire, situated on the river Avon a little to the south of the town. The building dates from the 17th century and accommodates a ten barrel capacity brew house. They brew four regular and two seasonal ales and are able to host super group visits, by prior arrangement.



Caledonian Sponsor of our Competition

Opened in 1869, this Victorian brewery has survived two major fires and an explosion. Deuchars IPA and Caledonian 80 are household names and a range of seasonal beers brewed in the last direct-fired open coppers in the UK go from strength to strength.



**Real ales always on in
the cosy bar
Deuchars IPA
Old Speckled Hen
Ossian
and two guest ales**



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New breweries - the more the merrier or too many for a static market?

This June, as the doors to the Scottish Real Ale Festival open once again, there are sure to be a few casks on offer from new breweries.

Indeed, you may even be reading this at the Corn Exchange - wondering whether to take a punt on a half from a producer you've never heard of. My advice is to finish reading this column, nod your head sagely and then go right ahead - one of the joys of attending a beer festival is trying new things, after all!

At the time of writing, the 2012 beer list has yet to be released - but I'd wager a small sum that the festival will see plenty of brow-furrowing over new breweries. Undoubtedly, this is a growing trend - SRAF 2011 had twelve brewers present who weren't there the year before. With more micro-breweries opening since, are we building up towards something that isn't sustainable?

Can we really have too much of a good thing?

As things stand, the Scottish brewing industry is in a period of rapid growth. Despite all of the challenges - the seemingly insurmountable costs and red tape involved - we now have over sixty producers. There are a number of reasons why (and why I think) it will carry on growing for some time. The continued popularity of decent beer is one, as consumers vote with their tastebuds at the expense of the giant lager brands.

Another major reason favouring the proliferation of micro-breweries is the Progressive Beer Duty (PBD) - proving that bureaucracy is not necessarily a bad thing.


As duty continues to rise, securing a 50% tax relief acts as a major incentive for new brewers. The flipside - that many mid-size producers feel hamstrung by PBD - is a serious talking point, however. Once you grow to beyond that qualifying threshold, the Treasury really sharpens its pencils. So, whilst in the grand scheme of things the PBD may create a false ceiling, remaining inside the comforting crèche does act as an incentive for new brewers taking up the craft. That particular word brings me on to another main reason why we're not yet at market saturation - the arrival of new styles, resurrection of old ones and the ability to embrace different methods of dispense. In a word - diversification. The intrepid brewer of the day has many more niches to fill with his or her creativity.

Whatever your personal view on the merits/evils of the keg, having a multitude of options is surely good for growth. Here in the Lothians, with four new producers on the immediate horizon (and more to follow), I don't believe it's mere coincidence that they overlap only slightly in terms of 'style'. St Andrews Brewing produces classic Scottish styles in the bottle. Alechemy in Livingston is going for hop-forward cask beers. DemonBrew puts out small batches of darker styles and the Eclipse Brewery plan is to focus on continental bottled beer. That's somewhat of a generalisation, I'll admit - once the Eclipse homebrewers get operational with a production brewery I guess they'll be firing out all sorts - and Bob Phaff of St Andrews will get into casking his beer as soon as he's able (I'm also aware his beers aren't made in the Lothians, before you write in.) The point is - as people become more aware of different styles and production methods, more brewers can arrive to fill those gaps. I touched on my final reason why we're not quite at market saturation yet with that last example - location. As with the food industry, brewing is in the position where it can become a local product. Having a brewery in your town/city - or even your area of that town/city - is a boon to 'beeries' (us liquid obsessed variants of foodies). Back in the day, most of the population had a local brewery - why not today? Rapid expansion of the brewing sector and regional favourites need not be mutually exclusive.

In the States, the US Craft Brewers Association recently revealed there are now over 2,000 producers in the country. On average, five new breweries opened throughout every week of 2011. Whilst praising the growth and available choice, some in America are wondering if they have already reached that point of saturation. We're not quite up to those astonishing numbers yet - clearly there are many different factors in play - but I, for one, think Scotland can squeeze in a few more breweries yet. . .

Richard Taylor

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



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Pear Tree House, Edinburgh - a brief history

In a past issue of POV it was mentioned that Pear Tree House was a rather unusual name for a pub. In fact this historic building only became a public house in 1982, but before then it had a long and interesting history stretching back two and a half centuries.

By the middle of the 18th century, Edinburgh's more prosperous citizens were increasingly looking to move outwith the crowded and insalubrious confines of the Old Town. With the New Town not yet conceived, attention turned to the southern hinterland where the recently drained meadows offered an appealing prospect.

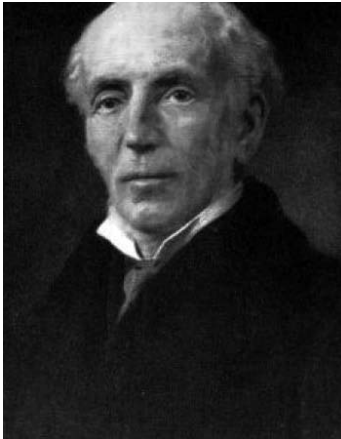
Accordingly, in 1746 one William Reid, a wealthy Edinburgh merchant, feued ground to the south of Bristo Port belonging to Lady Nicholson. Here he built a fine, commodious three storey dwelling house with an enclosed courtyard to the front overlooking the meadows and the goosedub.

The goosedub was a sump on the northern fringe of the erstwhile Burghloch and it was here in about 1598 that the pioneering Edinburgh Society of Brewers erected a windmill and cistern to pump brewing water to their brewery situated adjacent to Greyfriars Kirkyard. The windmill fell into disuse in about 1735 and was subsequently demolished. However it is commemorated to this day by Windmill Street, a short thoroughfare leading into George Square from Chapel Street.

Meanwhile William Reid's house, which was originally known as West Nicholson House to differentiate it from Lady Nicholson's own dwelling, was sold in 1756 to Sir James Fergusson, Lord Kilkerran. He died in 1759 but the house continued to be occupied by his widow Lady Jean Maitland, until her death in 1766. It then passed to her son Sir Adam Fergusson who later sat as a member of parliament for Edinburgh at Westminster.

In 1770 the house was sold to Dr Thomas Blacklock, a highly regarded blind academic, poet and preacher. Many important visitors, amongst them Dr Johnson and Robert Burns, came to the house to pay homage to the doctor. Blacklock died in 1791 but his family continued to live in the house.

In about 1819 the house was acquired by Andrew Usher of Huntly Burn near Melrose who moved to the city to enter the wines and spirits trade. His wife Margaret Balmer was a noted purveyor of wines and cordials made from the fruits of the hedgerow. She reputedly gave one of her recipes, for Green Ginger Wine, to family friend John Crabbie who went on to make a fortune from it. It is believed that it was Margaret Balmer who planted the fine old pear tree, which



grew up in front of the house for very many years and which gave the house its current name.

Andrew Usher had no fewer than eleven children and became the progenitor of a very famous brewing and distilling dynasty. His sons James and Thomas entered the brewing industry by acquiring the

Merchant Street Brewery in 1831 and prospered to the extent that they were later able to build themselves a large new modern brewery at St Leonards. Meanwhile Andrew Usher jnr, having pioneered vatted whiskies, acquired in 1859 the Sciennes Distillery which was formerly the Newington Brewery. He became a very rich man indeed and a noted public benefactor, his lasting gift to Edinburgh being the Usher Hall. In time, the Ushers' wealth allowed them to purchase grand houses and country estates and Pear Tree house was relegated to office use.

When the Usher distilling interests were disposed of to the Distillers' Company Ltd in 1919, Pear Tree House was included in the sale. It was subsequently utilised for many years by DCL subsidiary J & G Stewart Ltd who had assumed the rights to the Usher whisky brands.

The house continued to be used as an office and store until finally vacated in 1972 whereupon a decade of disuse and neglect ensued. There appeared to be a real danger that this outstanding example of domestic Scottish vernacular architecture would be demolished. Thankfully saner counsels prevailed and in 1982 it was converted into a vibrant and popular public house, with the former courtyard becoming an outdoor eating area. Its accessible location and close proximity to Edinburgh University has ensured the continued popularity of Pear Tree House with both the student fraternity and local denizens alike. Long may it continue.

My thanks to John Dallas of the Edinburgh History Magazine for help with this article.

Charlie McMaster, Edinburgh Brewing Heritage ©



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Our Chairman's Bit . .

It is important when writing one of these articles to look back at what was written last time. That way it is possible to have the virtue of consistency, but also to be able to follow on a theme. Last time I described the process of how we arrive at our Pubs of the Year (POTY). By the time you read this, this year's winners will have been announced and their certificates presented to them. The actual results are covered elsewhere in this magazine but there are other consequences of this annual activity and useful conclusions to be drawn.



For example, the success of this year's winner, Cobbles Inn at Kelso, has resulted in a motion of congratulations being deposited at the Scottish Parliament. This is certainly an unexpected consequence of our POTY activities but it does show how willing folk are to embrace good news and success, especially in a difficult economic climate. What reinforces our annual selection is the belief that our selection process is fair and thorough. Every year in our branch area there are a significant number of pubs and other outlets that could win these awards and this is a great tribute to their licensees, managers and staff.

It is also a great tribute to our CAMRA members and their activities throughout the year that this yearly task has once again been carried out successfully but there is absolutely no room for complacency. We should be looking at how we can improve our procedures so that we retain the confidence of our real ale drinkers. We also need to be flexible because there are always new challenges.

As an example of this, I got into conversation during one of

our branch's "Two Pubs Socials" in Stockbridge, Edinburgh, with someone who has virtually turned himself into a one man campaign. And what is this person campaigning about? His activity concerns a trend in the food and drink industry which would have been barely noticeable twenty years ago - local sourcing. This person often visits high standard hotels of well known chains in Scotland. Inevitably the menus of their restaurants are full of descriptions of locally sourced food, but in their bars? There will usually be a good selection of single malt whiskies but if you would like to drink a locally sourced beer you can often forget the idea.

It is not as if there is a shortage of local breweries in Scotland. Far from it, you can find them the length and breadth of the land. Our campaigning hero is also realistic enough to know that for some of these hotels the necessary turnover to keep a cask beer fresh is challenging, what with all the wine and whisky drinkers, but to be only offered bottles of Spanish lager? How does that encourage the local economy and demonstrate to visitors the excellence of local products?

Of course we in CAMRA would argue that one solution would be RAIB (Real Ale in a Bottle) from Scottish microbreweries. However, at the moment, these are rare and the logistics of dealing with them can be difficult but not insurmountable. Certainly the availability of non-RAIB bottles is more widespread and better than none, however bottles are not the only solution. One of our most respected microbrewers makes the point that he cannot understand the reluctance in the trade to accept smaller casks than those currently used. Admittedly the unit cost is higher but we are talking here of hotels and restaurants that would certainly put quality before cost.

Finally, our branch is now on Facebook www.facebook.co.uk/edinburghcamra and Twitter @CAMRA_Edinburgh

Roger Preece

Our Social Secretary's bit . . .

Once again it's been another busy and enjoyable period of social activities within our branch. Thankfully we were spared the terrible weather of last winter and our branch members were more easily able to attend our main regular social events - the monthly Two Pub Socials. These events were kept to Edinburgh city centre for the first couple of months of the year. For January we started at the Kenilworth in Rose Street. This Nicholson's pub had a good range of beers on offer and the two beers from Moor in Somerset proved to be particularly popular.



From there it was a short wander over to the Queens Arms in Frederick Street where the Stewart's Chilli Reekie certainly warmed up those who chose it.

In February we again started at a Nicholson's outlet - Deacon Brodies in the Royal Mile. After trying a couple of beers from their range it was on to the Jolly Judge where the assembled branch members certainly filled out this fine pub. Hadrian and Borders Tyneside Brown Ale and Tempest's Into The Light were both in fine form here.

March's Two Pub Social saw us going a little further out of the city centre by beginning at Leslie's Bar in Ratcliffe Terrace. This well established fixture of the city's real ale scene featured a good range of beers for those present to enjoy. Another brief stroll followed to take us to the Old Bell where the excellent Secret Kingdom from Hadrian and Borders was a firm favourite.

A trip to Stockbridge in April saw us commencing the evening at the Stockbridge Tap, always a popular pub amongst real ale enthusiasts and all beers were in good form on this occasion. Our second pub was just up the hill at the Antiquary in St Stephen Street where Orkney's Red McGregor was a popular choice.

It hasn't all been Two Pub Socials however. Another very enjoyable social event was held in March when we took part in a skittles match at the Sheep Heid. This event was the first in what is hoped to be an annual fixture against the Trotters Club whose members have been playing at the pub since the late nineteenth century. Whilst the final score was heavily in the Trotters' favour, a good time was certainly had by all who attended with some unusual skittling techniques being employed by the CAMRA team - including one member (who shall remain nameless) who found that he did much better by facing away from the skittles and throwing the ball through his legs! Some good beer was enjoyed with Acorn's Barnsley Bitter proving particularly popular.

Details of all social events are sent out to our members through our CAMRA Calling newsletter and are also available to all on our branch website together with our new Facebook page and Twitter feeds. The addresses of these are mentioned in Roger's bit.

Although more and more people have been joining in with 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 of real ale and would like to see more of what CAMRA is all about, then feel free to come along to any of our events where we will be delighted to see you.

Cheers!

Don Bell

Our Membership Secretary's bit . . .

Over the past few months I've spent some time looking at our branch statistics to see what they might tell us about our branch. I think that some of the numbers can help to give a different perspective on our branch and I'd like to share some of these observations with POV readers. But look away now if you're not into figures!



At the start of this year we had over 900 branch members, with about 69% residing in Edinburgh, 19% in the Lothians and 12% in the Borders. We can detail this down even further by producing a "map" of where our members stay. Whilst, of course, this information is confidential to CAMRA, it helps us to pinpoint the areas that will attract the most members when deciding where to hold our branch meetings and socials.

And here's a statistic that you might want to jot down. We have over 350 pubs serving real ale in our branch area and that effectively means there is a real ale pub for every three members. Now did you know that? However, on a more serious note, we know that there are real ale drinkers that are not CAMRA members. Given that our branch expects to reach the milestone of 1,000 members in 2012, this is an opportune time to encourage more real ale drinkers to join CAMRA. The 1,000th member will receive a Good Beer Guide. There's a joining form in this magazine or

you can join right away by visiting www.camra.org.uk/joinus. You'll get £20 of Wetherspoon vouchers, which will all but



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Scott our webmaster, partner Pam and "new CAMRA recruit" William who is reluctant to show off his Half-Pint t-shirt

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The Sheep Heid Inn - Scotland's oldest surviving public house. Est. 1360

A meal, a pint and a game of skittles.

There is hardly a more historic pub in Edinburgh than The Sheep Heid. It is claimed that there has been some sort of watering hole on this spot for hundreds of years. If you visit I would highly recommend that you walk there. Coming from the city centre you can take the high road or the low road. Both circle Arthur's Seat and take in The Innocent Railway and Duddingston Loch. If you take the high road, like me and Mr Bite, you will work up an appetite and a thirst, perfect for an investigation into the beer and food matching potential of the menu.

The Sheep Heid is owned by Mitchells and Butlers, an English-based pub chain that has a number of outlets in Edinburgh. Always on offer are Deuchars and ale from the Harviestoun Brewery plus two guests. When we visited, our choice of beers was Deuchars, Bitter and Twisted, Taiphooon (Hopback) and Elixir (Everards).

To start I chose the Rannoch Moor Smoked Beef with Roasted Beetroot and Horseradish Cream and a Deuchars to match and Mr Bite had the Pan-Fried Lamb Kidneys, Mushroom and Wholegrain Mustard Cream in a Toasted Ciabatta with the Elixir. My beef was beautifully succulent and rare and it is good to see some smoked Scottish produce on the menu. The Deuchars was reasonably complementary but I would ideally have liked darker more complex ale. Mr Bite's kidneys (that sounds so wrong) were extremely flavoursome and the Elixir was actually a perfect match; its bitter, dry, earthy notes complemented the visceral meat whilst the tangy mustard provided lift.

For main course I chose Beer Battered Haddock,

Chunky Chips and Mushy Peas with Tartare Sauce, Spicy Ketchup and Aspath's Malt Vinegar and a pint of Taiphooon. The lemongrass and coriander notes of the beer would obviously work great with a Thai Curry but I was more than happy that it was accompanying a 'fish supper'. It had the right amount of dryness to act as a foil to the fish and chips and cleansed the palate nicely. Mr Bite had the Beer, Mushroom and Guinness Pie with a Puff Pastry Lid and Cheddar Topped Mashed Potatoes; his choice of beer being the Elixir. We both thought it was a little characterless and certainly not as good as the Taiphooon. He declared his pie deep, dark and mysterious. Both main courses were quite spectacular. My fish lay across the chips as big as a beached whale whilst the shin of the bone on Mr Bite's pie poked out of the crust proudly.

We shared a Crème Brûlée to finish and should really have had a game of skittles to work off some calories. Instead, we decided to return another day and we have. The Skittle Alley is attached to the pub and is hugely popular. As the website says 'a few hours of good, old-fashioned entertainment'. It is also worth noting that The Sheep Heid was runner up in the Observer Food Awards 2010 for Best Sunday Lunch (I would book).

A great pub in a unique location. The food is superior pub grub and although the selection of ales on tap is a little limited we enjoyed what we tasted. By the way, the reason we didn't taste the Bitter and Twisted is because we know it so well!

Sharon Wilson is Publisher/Editor of Bite Magazine www.bite-magazine.com the monthly mini guide to eating and drinking in Edinburgh.

Ed - why is it the Sheep Heid and not the Sheep's Heid?



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A New Town Pub Crawl

Hi, I'm Keith Savage,

I'm a roaming travel writer whose home is in the United States and I'm particularly fond of both Scotland and real ale; I was made very welcome at an Edinburgh CAMRA branch meeting last year and I'm happy to contribute articles for Pints of View.

Those of you who know my website www.traveling-savage.com may be familiar with my series of Savage pub crawls. Now it's time to tackle one of Edinburgh's most pub-rich areas: the New Town. Local real ale fans will know the pubs on this crawl, but I hope that readers who are less familiar with the city will find the crawl interesting. There are so many drinking dens in the orderly Georgian New Town that I could devise a different pub crawl every day for a month, but there's a handful of pubs here that are true highlights of any visit to Edinburgh.

When the people of Edinburgh drained the Nor' Loch and built the New Town they focused on geometrical precision and symmetry. Three primary streets run parallel to each other for the entire length of New Town and cross streets run perpendicular to these at regular intervals. The result is a neighbourhood where it's easy to keep your bearings even after a pint or four.

Begin the pub crawl where North Bridge meets Princes Street. Directly in front of you stands West Register House, one of Edinburgh's primary records repositories. Cross at the traffic lights and follow the cobblestones of West Register Street up to where the street veers to the left and you'll see the first stop on the pub crawl: The Guildford

Arms. The Guildford is one of the crown jewels of Edinburgh's "Golden Age" of pubs built in the late nineteenth century. The exterior is smooth red stone with arched windows while the interior is sheer opulence with rich woods and golden scrollwork everywhere. This is a traditional pub serving up an excellent array of cask ales and whiskies and upstairs you can grab a bite to eat (if you can get a table, that is). The Guildford manages to be both spacious and cosy, but above all transporting: the nineteenth century never seemed so accessible. Exit The Guildford Arms and turn left and in about a dozen steps you'll be standing outside The Café Royal. Much like The Guildford Arms, the Café Royal is another "Golden Age" traditional pub with jaw-dropping decor and architectural embellishments. The ritzy interior is almost always packed because, really, it's just a gorgeous place to enjoy a pint. It grew famous as an oyster bar and there's still a thriving restaurant. While this is one of the most beautiful pubs in all of Scotland, don't get too comfortable. There's more to come.

Follow West Register Street after leaving The Café Royal until you reach St. Andrews Street. Go right and then immediately left so you're following the southern edge of St. Andrews Square. At St. David Street, go left and then immediately right onto Rose Street where you'll soon see The Abbotsford. This bar completes the trio of "Golden Age" traditional pubs to start the pub crawl, though each of them has its own unique twist. For the Abbotsford, it's the incredible island bar. The pub takes its name from Sir Walter Scott's mansion in Roxburghshire and it's one of the few places left in the city that

still serves ale from the classic Aitken founts. Aficionados claim that ales taste better from these founts because they aren't artificially aerated. Discernible or not, it's one of my favourite places to drink. By this point we've walked little more than three blocks, so it's time to stretch the legs a bit and walk off some of the brew.

Say goodbye to the Abbotsford and continue west down Rose Street. You'll pass a number of other pubs and restaurants before you reach Frederick Street, where you'll turn right. Follow this, crossing George Street and heading downhill toward Thistle Street. On your right, at the corner of Frederick Street and Thistle Street, is the subterranean Queen's Arms. It's a dark, cosy place that feels like someone put a bar inside a library and it's actually much larger than I expected. Several different areas girded by bookcases and booths comprise the space, while bottles, pots and other bits of culinary paraphernalia hang from the ceiling. It's a quirky easy-to-like place that might be the best place to while away a rainy Scottish day. Climb from the depths - we've got one more stop and it's famous. Go west along Thistle Street, crossing Castle Street, until you reach the Oxford Bar. Unlike the "Golden Age" pubs, "The Ox," as it's affectionately known, is quite unobtrusive. A small, green sign hangs over the front of the whitewashed lower level. If you've read Ian Rankin's crime novels, you should be well acquainted with The Ox - it's the favourite drinking hole of Detective Inspector John Rebus. The interior is a simple affair with unassuming black furniture and the feeling of someone's house. This gives the place a homely atmosphere and who knows, you might just bump into Rebus's creator while you're here.

Happy quaffing. Keith Savage

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The Meadows Ramble

A pleasant spring evening in Edinburgh and what better than a stroll around the Meadows? Yes, I really do mean 'around', because the idea was to undertake a pub crawl of all the pubs just outside the perimeter of the Meadows.

Some ground rules, then - firstly, let's call Bruntsfield Links an extension of the Meadows; secondly, where there is a bunch of pubs, let's choose just one of them on a fairly non-scientific basis (sorry Dagda Bar, Golf Tavern, Bisque, International Bar) just to keep things manageable.

As I started, the sunshine gave way to heavy showers, setting the pattern for the evening. Not deterred, I finally arrived at the **Meadow Bar**, appropriately enough, in Buccleuch St. The beers on offer here were all from Caledonian; Deuchars IPA, Flying Scotsman and a seasonal special, Raspberry Fool. I wasn't ready for a fruity beer so I went for the Flying Scotsman which was served in terrific condition (4). (See the footnote at the end for an explanation of the numbers (beer scores) dotted through this piece, by the way.) The bar was busy and noisy, with the wood paneling, stone floor and decent rock music helping to create a good lively atmosphere. The Meadow's kitchen was closed the week I was in, but by all accounts the food's very popular with students, locals and others. The eight-metre stainless steel ceiling snake above the bar here is extraordinary. A good experience then, at the Meadow Bar.

Reluctantly giving the Dagda Bar (with two Tempest beers on) a miss, I passed the future site of Barney's Brewery and then heading west parallel to the Meadows in pouring rain towards the **Argyle Bar** in Argyle Place, another new pub for me. The only ale on offer here was Stewart Pentland IPA which I'd not had for a while and really enjoyed while I dried out (4). The Edinburgh Gold pump next to it had the sign "I'm waiting for breakdown assistance" hanging from it, so there must have been some kind of technical problem I guess. A more interesting sign behind the bar claimed that the pipes were cleaned every time the beers were changed (keg as well as real?). The rest of the Argyle's layout is traditional, with bare floorboards everywhere. On my visit the pub was much less busy than the Meadow, so that the TV News (with sound) seemed fairly intrusive.

It's only seventy paces down the road to the **Earl of Marchmont**, another pub I'd not visited before - a smart, bright Cask Marque corner bar. This bar turned out to be extremely dog-friendly - there were large boundy dogs everywhere! The beers available were Caledonian Deuchars IPA and Flying Scotsman. This time I selected Deuchars, which gave me my third straight (4). This well-run bar is still only a short stroll from the Meadows, with the same TV news showing as the Argyle but with the sound mercifully muted in favour of 1980s AOR music. Continuing the musical theme there are plenty of band/gig posters on the walls. You'll also find some very obscure male/female toilet door signs.

Carrying on (now happily in the dry) up the cobbled street I arrived at

the Links '**Hotel/Bar/Kitchen**' in Alvanley Terrace, a bar which was refurbished in 2011 and which I had not revisited since that time. The beers on offer here, self-evidently in the midst of Caley-land, were Deuchars IPA, McEwans 80/- and Dutchman. The 80/- seems to be a bit of a rarity in cask form these days, but I went for the Dutchman (4 again); this ale seems to have acquired some new, very refreshing, spiciness since Caley dropped the word 'Flying' from its name.

The Links has a big, comfortable bar with extensive sports coverage and lots of well-designed seating areas. Tucking myself into a corner I studied my notes so far - only six different ales on sale in the four pubs visited, but that would no doubt change during my next two stops!

Skirting Bruntsfield Links I headed for Tollcross, passing in quick succession, the Golf Tavern, Auld Toll, Bennetts, Burlington Berties and the International Bar. This brought me to the well-known beer palace of **Cloisters**, converted from an old parsonage near the west end of the Meadows.

I'd heard that the Highland Brewery was having a 'tap takeover' to promote their beers generally and therefore I was not surprised to see all nine pumps were dispensing Highland's real ales, to help launch its new Pale Ale (4.7%) and some other new beers. Rob Hill, Highland's esteemed brewer, was there too (thanks for the introductions, Colin!) and talked enthusiastically about the ales on offer. The place was packed and to save time I ordered halves of three beers I'd not seen before - the aforementioned Pale Ale (5!), The Duke IPA (4) and 'Cloisters Staff Pint' (3). There were quite a few CAMRA Branch members there and, as is always the case with these events at Cloisters, everyone was having a great time. I had to leave before trying any of the dark beers - I never like to miss the Dark Munro but still had to complete my circuit. For the record, the other five ales were Sneaky Wee Stout, Orkney Best, Orkney Blast, St Magnus and Old Norway.

I took the bus up to the Forrest Road triangle and entered **Doctors** for the first time since its refurbishment in November 2011. To be honest I couldn't see too many differences apart from an overall smartening-up, which is not a bad thing as the layout of the pub is open and welcoming and didn't really need changed. Here I found an excellent selection of exclusively Scottish ales on eight gleaming handpumps - Williams Joker IPA, Deuchars IPA, Cairngorm Trade Winds, Inveralmond Doctors Orders, Atlas Three Sisters, Orkney Raven, Stewart 80/- and No 3. Having enjoyed Williams' beers recently I selected the Joker IPA (4). The pub was busy and convivial, with quite a few people eating from the all-day menu and plenty trying the cask beer. This is another Cask Marque pub which sets itself a high standard of beer selection and quality.

Reluctantly I didn't try the house ale, which I'd not had before, and set off for the station. It had been an evening of very high quality, tasty ale, generally served with efficiency and good humour in interesting and varied pub settings. It had also been awful weather. I called in at the **Nether Abbey**, North Berwick, for some Hop Back Summer Lightning (3) while waiting for the bus home and realised that I'd found my first non-Scottish ale of the night!

CAMRA members submit beer scores such as those I mention above. The range is from zero to five, five being exceptional (remember it's the beer you're scoring, nothing else). In November these scores are a major input to the first stage of the process of selecting the Branch entries for the following September's Good Beer Guide. If you're not already scoring regularly, why not do so? It's good fun and it might encourage you to visit lots of pubs you might not otherwise go to. To find a full explanation of the scoring system and to submit scores, go to www.beerscoring.org.uk

Pat Hanson

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Two good causes
Rugby and football fans will appreciate, I'm sure, the following charities:

Rugby union and ale fans are raising a glass to commentating legend Bill McLaren. The Bill McLaren Foundation, launched last year to further the long term ambitions of the sport, has come up with the perfect big match companion - the Bill McLaren IPA. The unique blend has been produced exclusively for the Bill McLaren Foundation by the Black Isle Brewing Company. Linda Lawson, Bill's daughter, said "Dad played such a huge part in the public's enjoyment of rugby for 50 years, it's great to regain that connection."

It's available in bottles from all branches of Vino Wines and other specialist beer and wine shops in Edinburgh, as well as from the Waterside Inn in Haddington and Teviot Wines in Hawick, Bill's birthplace. Further stockists are being appointed. A percentage from every bottle sold will be donated to the Bill McLaren Foundation. Both cask and keg draught versions have also been trialled and Dalton's in Hawick was one of the first pubs to sell the draught. Just remember - dinnae drink it all at once, laddie!

For more information visit www.billmclarenfoundation.co.uk

Ed - Thanks to David Pike for allowing us to take excerpts from his article. See www.exploretheborders.com

Football fans and members of Scotland's Tartan Army are not the only fans who have been enjoying a pint or two of the Tartan Army Sunshine Appeal Ale - and no it's not called Tartan Special!



The charity donates money to worthwhile causes in every country that the Scotland Team plays in. Organiser Neil Forbes of the Tyneside Tavern in Haddington asks drinkers of the ale to donate 10p per pint then the pub matches it. It's a 3.6% ABV amber coloured beer brewed by Wells & Young's. Look out for it appearing around the time that Scotland play abroad.

For more information on the Tartan Army Sunshine Appeal got to www.tasunshineappeal.co.uk

A Campaign of Two Halves

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- If an error or mistake in the payment of your Direct Debit to The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd tells you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

03/08

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