

Issue 75

—

Winter 2020

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Digital Edition

PINTS of VIEW



Campaign
for
Real Ale

The CAMRA Magazine for Edinburgh and South-East Scotland

Beer in the Time of COVID

In this issue ...

- Tiled Pubs: Central Bar, Leith
- Nobles Bar photo history
- Pints of View 30 Years On
- Latest real ale pub news
- Latest local brewery news
- ... and more!


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SIT DOWN
SHUT UP
THANK YOU



Pints of View is the magazine of the Edinburgh & South-East Scotland Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), an independent, voluntary organisation campaigning for real ale, community pubs and consumer rights.



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Editorial

After cancelling the Summer 2020 issue of *PoV* due to the pandemic, we've switched to an online-only magazine for the time being. In this issue, we catch up on this year's events and take stock of the current situation.

We'd like to express our appreciation to all the pubs (like the Roseburn Bar pictured on the cover) who have been putting a huge effort into providing a safe environment for customers – with scant recognition or reward (as has been the case all over the UK). And a big up to all of our breweries which have done a fantastic job to keep going in such a challenging environment. Also, a big thumbs up for Neil Bibby's Tied Pubs Bill finally gaining the support of the Scottish Government and passing its First Stage in the Scottish Parliament.

Please note all information in this issue is subject to prevailing restrictions. We intend to keep [WhatPub](#) up-to-date with pubs that are open, doing takeaways etc. but it's hard to keep track of them all and we'd advise checking the pub's own social media for up-to-date information.

Scott

Cover photo: Charlie Hughes

Advertising Rates

Our standard fees for advertisements are as follows:

- Full page: £285
- Half-page: £190
- Quarter-page: £115
- One-eighth page: £75
- Back cover: £POA

For digital-only issues the rates will be approx 10% of those above. We normally also give a discount for multiple inserts in a single publication.

All enquiries to advertising@edinburghcamra.org.uk

Subscriptions

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- 4 issues – £8.00
- 6 issues – £12.00

We currently endeavour to publish *PoV* twice a year. You can also read the current and previous issues on our website.

Subscription requests with a cheque payable to "Edinburgh CAMRA" should be sent to:

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c/o Jon Addinall
22 Wadingburn Road
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CAMRA Calling

Branch News

Branch Pubs of the Year

The winners of the 2020 Branch Pub of the Year awards, announced in February this year, were:

Edinburgh

- 1st **Dreadnought**
- 2nd **Monty's**
- 3rd **Stockbridge Tap**

Lothians

- 1st **Staggs**, Musselburgh
- 2nd **Dean Tavern**, Newtongrange
- 3rd **Grey Horse**, Balerno

Borders

- 1st **Craw Inn**, Auchencrow
- 2nd **Bridge Inn**, Peebles
- 3rd (joint) **Exchange Bar**, Hawick; **Plough Inn**, Leitholm

Cider Pub of the Year

Jolly Judge, Edinburgh

Staggs is the Edinburgh & South East Scotland Overall Pub of the Year for 2020.

Congratulations to all the winners!

Forthcoming Branch Events

At present, sadly there are no physical branch meetings planned, due to social distancing requirements. Please check the Branch Diary page on our website (www.edinburghcamra.org.uk/diary/) for future developments.

Forthcoming Scotland & NI Branches (SNIB) Events

Online SNIB meeting hosted by Forth Valley branch.

10am, February 6th 2021

See snib.camra.org.uk/whats-on/events/ for more details.

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We'll be back. Stay safe

PINTS OF VIEW 30 YEARS ON

by Pat Hanson

I recently acquired a copy of issue number 3 of *Pints of View*, published in Summer 1990. The headline story, 'Elders buy Grand Met Breweries', reported that Grand Metropolitan had sold its breweries to Courage (owned by Elders IXL, at that point a division of Foster's). The breweries affected by this deal included Ushers of Trowbridge, Ruddles, Trumans and Websters of Halifax. Grand Met remained a FTSE100 company until it merged with Guinness plc to become Diageo in 1997.

The article went on to report that Whitbread had sold off all of its Scottish pubs, four to Yates's Wine Lodge and the remainder to the Allan Partnership, which appeared to be some sort of Whitbread spin-off or management buy-out (according to some sparse info from a Google search).

Elsewhere in issue 3's eight pages we read that the **Bow Bar** had won 'Best Refurbished Pub' in CAMRA's annual Pub Design and Conservation Awards. This was a fitting tribute to the great work put in by Iain Whyte and his team in transforming the former **Café Bijoux**.

Does anyone remember these pubs, which all received a mention? – **Spirit Level** in Coldingham; **Green Tree**, Gorgie; **Wardie Hotel**, Granton; **Blue Lagoon**, Bogarts and the **Old Coach** (all Edinburgh/Leith). The forerunner of the current Caledonian Heritable pub group was Coronation Inns; it got a mention for taking over the **Ormelie** at Joppa in 1990 (the group still runs it). Then in the Tollcross area we read that Maclay's 80/- was in good form at **Chaplin's**, the **Earl of Lothian** and the **Bull 'n' Bush**. What became of these pubs, I wonder?

Amongst pubs changing hands, or on the market, were the **Cross Keys** Ancrum, **Oxford Bar** (venue for the June 1990 CAMRA Branch meeting), **Cramond Inn** (this had only recently been acquired by Sam Smith's, who in fact still have it now!) and the **Covenanter/Valentines** on the Royal Mile.

Belhaven were said to be changing most of their managed pubs to tenancies – a related comment referred to the recent ex-manager of the **Starbank Inn**, one Dougie Newlands, in favourable terms!

There was then an entertaining write-up of a CAMRA Branch minibus trip to Ulverston in Cumbria to visit Hartley's brewery and a number of pubs in the town and surrounding countryside.

A lengthy article by Charles McMaster of the Scottish Brewing Archive described 'The Decline of Edinburgh as a Brewing Centre'. Charles documented that in the 1960s alone Aitchisons, Murrays, Fowlers, Steel Coulson, Maclachlan's, Deuchars and Youngs all ceased brewing, with Campbells not long surviving into the 1970s. He concluded by saying that 'What is beyond all doubt is that an oligopolistic situation now prevails in Scotland, and one which is unlikely to be challenged given the brewers' control of the market'. Another article echoed many of the same themes, remarking that Edinburgh was down to three brewers, plus the Rose Street brewpub (located at the current **Rose Street Brewery** pub).

Two whole pages were given over to reproductions of correspondence between the PoV Editor, Helen Horn, and Dr J D Brown, Head Brewer at S&N's Fountain Brewery. Dr Brown and S&N had taken exception to comments in the previous issue of the magazine in respect of their cask ales (particularly an apparent suggestion that bright beer was being supplied to pubs instead of cask conditioned beer). Dr Brown's final letter, as published, sought to smooth things over by repeating an invitation for CAMRA to visit the brewery at Fountainbridge.

Finally, does anyone remember **St Elmo's Bar and Diner** at 7 Victoria St, Edinburgh? It was one of four pubs advertising in this issue. The site is now occupied by the Mariachi Mexican restaurant.

In the next PoV I'll take a look at a 1992 edition (issue 9) which included Jim Lawrie's challenging quiz!

(with thanks to CAMRA Branch Secretary Jim Darroch for passing on the old magazines)



City Ale Tales

Pub News

Good news from Leith, where new real ale outlet **Dukes** opened on the former **Duke's Head** site in Duke St. The single handpump has been serving real ale from Fallen, Fyne Ales and other Scottish brewers. It's now a bright and friendly café-bar with lots of yellow décor.



Elsewhere in Leith, two familiar names have moved in. The former **Finn & Bear** is now **Innis & Gunn Taproom Leith** and the **Compass** has become **Brass Monkey Shore**. Sadly neither pub is selling real ale, unlike their Edinburgh namesakes.

The **Foot of the Walk** has undergone a full internal refurbishment, with the bar moved across to the opposite wall to allow a full glass wall where the bar used to be, to let in more natural light.

Leith Depot achieved a little more security when it was announced at the end of 2019 that Drum had lost their appeal against the Council's refusal of permission to demolish and redevelop the site. Later in 2020 Drum came forward with some alternative plans which would preserve the 1930s sandstone buildings and provide new retail and hospitality options.

Nearby on Leith Walk the former **Bar Brig** has now been taken over and refurbished as **Mother Superior** by Jane Nolan from the **Black Cat**. There's no real ale at present, although it's a possibility for the future.

In North Leith the **Village** pub, with one real ale, closed down in January after noise complaints and repeated licensing issues. Other cask ale venue closures across Edinburgh in 2020 due to COVID restrictions, or through sale, redevelopment, etc, have



included **My Friend the Murderer** (which had only recently opened on the former **Mockingbird** site); **Royal McGregor**; **Empress of Broughton St**; **Smithies**; and the **Dalriada**. Other casualties have included **Stewart's Dockside Tap**, **Jam House**, **Sofi's**, **Harry's Bar**, (possibly) **Lebowski's**, **Inverleith** and the **Longstone Inn**, part of which subsided into the Water of Leith after heavy rainfall.

Harmonium, the vegan real ale restaurant/bar on Henderson St, relocated to East London St (next to the **Cask & Barrel**) and reopened in September. Campervan Brewery opened **Lost in Leith** on Commercial St in March just before lockdown (enter through the back by the old railway lines). It's a showcase for Campervan's own beers and also has a number of guests on the taps, some of which are extracted from keykegs and may therefore be 'real ale'.

Moving away from Leith, **St Bernard's Bar** in Stockbridge, right next to the **Stockbridge Tap**, reopened after a long closure shortly after the last PoV went to press. It carries up to three real ales and also has an attractive upstairs overflow area, the main bar being very small.

In the West End **Ryrie's** has been taken over by the DM Stewart pub group. All of their other pubs have opened at some point during 2020 apart from the **Canons' Gait** on the Royal Mile. The **Haymarket** across the road from Ryrie's has undergone a substantial refurbishment but the actual reopening plans were put on hold by Nicholson's, who have also been keeping the **Kenilworth** closed. **Au Bar** became the **Fox and Faun** after a period of uncertainty but the real ale has disappeared in this extremely dog-friendly venue, as it has at the nearby **Green Room**, although in this case, we are told this is only temporary. Other pubs losing real ale have included **Black Ivy**, **Whiski**, **Chanter**, **Jolly Botanist** and **Jessie May's**.

In the South of Edinburgh, Grant McNeil's group that comprises the **Greenmantle** and the **Mash Tun** has now taken on the **Auld Hoose** as well, thus ending the very long association of Jonathan Winks, a CAMRA member, with that pub. Its famous nachos, veggie and vegan food have remained on the menu, along with the real ale.



Steel Coulson

Ian Black, the licensee of **Leslie's**, has now bought the pub outright, which should be beneficial to the preservation of its historic interior, not to mention the cask ale. Up the road, the **Aviator** did not last long in that particular guise. Glen Dawkins from **Steel Coulson** is converting it into a Southside version of that pub with, he says, similar plans for real

ale and other beers and ciders when it opens in December 2020.

Edinburgh Beer Factory has also joined in with the growing enthusiasm for brewery-owned pubs, opening the **Paolozzi Restaurant & Bar** in a former bank site near Bristo Square. It has no real ale but does display a number of interesting historical features. Another new pub, the **Piper's Rest**, sprang up on Hunter Square on the site of a former chicken-based restaurant. It's very well run but again has no cask beer. It's the same story at Signature Pubs' massive new project between Bruntsfield and Morningside known as **McLarens on the Corner**, yet again a bank replacement.

Another Signature venue, the **Auld Hundred** on Rose St, is amongst the pubs that have not reopened at all (in some sense) yet since March. Other real ale examples include **Theatre Royal, Doric, Halfway House, Arcade, Traverse Theatre** and **Beer House** at Waverley Station.

The **Spylaw Tavern** has removed its return trays/autovacs after a refurbishment, citing hygiene reasons. Also in the far South West, here's a shout out to Alan Forrest and his team at **Tanner's**, on the northern edge of Juniper Green. Alan has owned this pub for 32 years and serves Doom Bar and an IPA on handpump.

Finally, in late 2019 a number of Best Bar None awards for Edinburgh included golds for **Winston's** and the **Windsor**, as well as a silver award for **Monty's**. Congratulations to all of them.

Craig Millar

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Tiled Paintings in Edinburgh Pubs

Part 5: Central Bar, Leith

by Michael Slaughter and Geoff Brandwood

In Part 4 (*Pints of View* issue 74, Winter 2019) we described the eleven tiled paintings at Barony Bar, Edinburgh. This time we visit a pub with an interior so impressive that the listed status of the building was upgraded from Grade B to Grade A by Historic Scotland in 2008 as part of their Heritage Pubs Thematic Survey. It therefore now has the highest level of protection

The Central Bar pub was rebuilt in 1899 and formed part of Leith Central Station which opened in 1903. Originally there was a stair from the rear of the bar to the platforms enabling patrons easy access to the station. Passenger services up to Edinburgh ceased in 1952 and after twenty years as a motive power depot it closed completely. Only a clock tower and the terminal building serve as a reminder of this piece of railway history - including, thank goodness, the Central Bar.

The interior was designed by Peter Lyle Henderson who was responsible for some of the most elaborate pub interiors in Edinburgh – his other work includes the Abbotsford, Leslie's Bar, and Deacon Brodies. The walls are completely covered by



floor-to-ceiling tilework made by the famous Stoke-on-Trent firm of Minton Hollins & Co.





Golf – featuring the Prince of Wales, soon to be King Edward VII



Hare-coursing



Hunting with pointers



Yacht racing at Cowes Regatta

A particularly delightful feature is the presence of inset rectangular panels of tall, narrow bevelled mirrors in combination with ornamental panels and four tiled scenes of sporting activities.

On the left-hand side above four deep bays of U-plan fixed seating are two panels – the first depicts yacht-racing at Cowes Regatta; the other one depicts hare-coursing. On the right above more conventional fixed seating and a carved timber fireplace is a panel with golf and figure who looks remarkably like the Prince of Wales, soon to become King Edward VII. In the corner is the fourth panel depicting hunting with pointers.

When in the Central Bar don't miss the original elaborately carved gantry featuring figures of four carved griffins and also the U-shaped bar counter having a front with paired Corinthian pilasters. Also the mosaic floored lobbies.

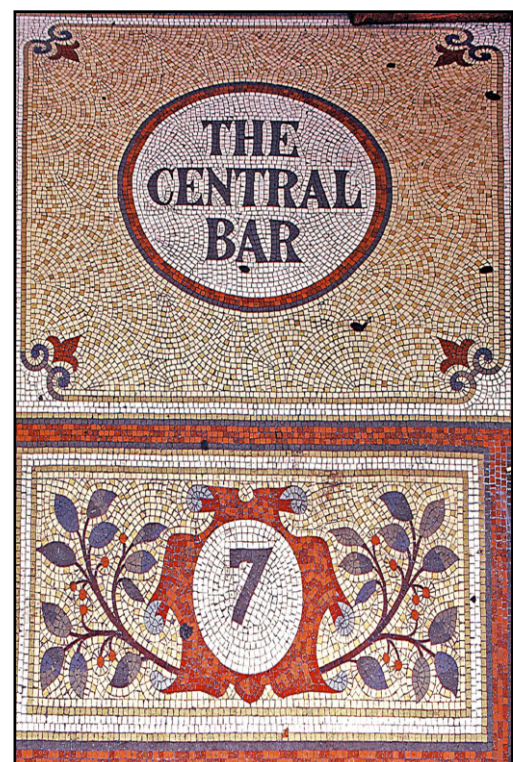
But, sadly, no real ale is sold here.

In this series we have brought to readers' attention the amazing displays of tiled paintings in so many Edinburgh pubs – Cafe Royal in *Pints of View* 71 & 72; Bennets Bar in *PoV* 73; Barony Bar in *PoV* 74 as well as the Central Bar. These tiled paintings are from the late-Victorian era and there is just one more pub to bring to your attention. But the 'tile paintings' are 'fake' – more of which next issue.

The next issue will introduce readers to more fantastic pubs in Edinburgh but these are ones that were not built as pubs but have been converted from banks and other buildings with ornate interiors; also, some impressive creations that look as

though they have been in existence for many years; even one with an interior that is a copy of another Edinburgh pub! These pubs feature in a new CAMRA project – identifying ones with 'Outstanding Conversions and Restorations'.

More information can be found at <https://camra.org.uk/pubs-and-clubs/learn-more/outstanding-pub-conversions-and-restorations> which includes the list of pubs throughout the UK identified so far. If you want to suggest more possible candidates for inclusion there is an email address you can use.



Mosaic floor in the lobby

All photographs by Michael Slaughter LRPS

BEER AND LOTHIAN

Pub News

South Queensferry has gained a real ale pub to make up partly for three recent losses, with the **Stag Head Hotel** supplying a beer from the nearby Ferry Brewery on its single handpump.

The **Juniper Green Inn** has reverted to its former name of the **Railway Inn** and has a new frontage. Down the road in Balerno, the **Balerno Inn** opened as planned at the end of 2019, many years after the closure of the former **Malleny Arms** on the same site. Owner Ben Watson said: 'My aim is to make the Balerno Inn very much the heart of the local community'. There are three function rooms, five letting bedrooms, an attractive garden and two real ales.

As this was written, West Lothian entered Level 4 of the Scottish Government's restrictions (or 'protections' as they would prefer to call them). This meant that all pubs would have to close completely, apart from making takeaway sales. The **Fork and Field** in Mid Calder is now run by Ben Smith, who also operates the **Riccarton Inn**, Currie and the **Kinleith Mill**, Juniper Green.

In Midlothian, Gordon Gilhooley is the new operator of the former **Haig's** in Penicuik; after refurbishment it was renamed **Mother's Kitchen and Gin**. They started off enthusiastically with two rotating real ales but there have latterly been signs that this enthusiasm may not be lasting. Elsewhere in Penicuik the **Navaar House Hotel** suffered a fire in its cellar area in April, with part of the original listed stables also receiving some damage. One site to close for good was the **Melville Castle Hotel** in Lasswade. The **Sun Inn**, Lothianbridge, has had a fairly substantial revamp to cope with the COVID world. We trust that drinkers will still be welcome (when permitted), as a new bar area was added only recently.



East Lothian gained another real ale pub in Musselburgh when the **Muss Bar & Kitchen** reopened after an extensive modernisation by Star Pubs and Bars. It's on the site of the former **Burgh** pub and also has an attractive courtyard area at the back. At the outset the two real ales were from the Marston's stable. Also in Musselburgh, there have been signs (activity on Facebook) that Caledonian Heritable's long-running refurbishment of the **Ship Inn**, near Fisherrow Harbour, is nearing completion. There's no information yet about any real ale offering. JD Wetherspoon has been planning to extend the **David MacBeth Moir** into the adjacent old snooker hall, with potentially a roof garden on top of that.

After a period of closure, and a change of lessee, the **Old Aberlady Inn** reopened in the autumn. Other pubs to change hands in East Lothian have included the **Ship Inn** in North Berwick, where Niall Middleton stepped down after 10 years at the helm. It's now run by Alan Bowes' group that also includes the **Scottie, Clermiston Inn** and **Terrace** in Edinburgh. There have been no significant changes at the pub since reopening (but please bring back the pizzas!).

At the **Brig & Barrel** in Belhaven, James Hughes has been busy during the 2020 restrictions expanding and improving his already impressive beer garden. There are two real ales here, often from Alechemy and Stewarts.

The **Castle Inn** on the village green in Dirleton is now run by **Jack Findlay**, who has left his brother James to look after the **Waterside Bistro** in Haddington. Jamie and Elaine McCormack finally said goodbye to the **Winton Arms** in Pencaitland at the end of February, having stayed on to help with the transition to modernisation by Caledonian Heritable. Their ambitious plans received the OK from East Lothian Council, but progress on the work has been delayed.

Other East Lothian news:

- Real ale has been taken off sale at the **Victoria Inn** in Haddington and replaced with a Stewart keg product
- Steve and David from Winton Brewery took over the **Station Yard** micropub in Dunbar (no real ale yet) on 1st March
- **Ross High Rugby Club** in Tranent (open to the public) undertook a major refurbishment this year, including the bar area. We hope that real ale will still be available, as it's the



Castle Inn, Dirleton

only place in Tranent selling it, although the sports fixture shutdown will be challenging for them

- The **Mercat Bar & Grill**, Whitecraig won 'Pub/Bistro of the Year' at the Midlothian and East Lothian Food & Drink Awards 2020.
- The **Bonnie Badger**, Gullane also won the 'Excellence in Customer Service' category at the same awards.

East Lothian entered the Scottish Government's COVID-19 Protection Level 2 shortly before PoV went to press. This should allow some slight transition to normality, although wet-led pubs such as **Stagg's**, **Levenhall Arms** and **Station Yard** with no kitchen facilities were apparently proscribed from serving drinks in their outside areas due to the (in our opinion, unfair) framing of the regulations. CAMRA is taking this up with MSPs and others.

Craig Leith

Please note: with more than 300 real ale pubs in the branch area, our Pub News columns cannot mention every one in every issue. However, if you have some news about your pub you'd like us to share in the next issue, please get in touch (contact details on p2).

For more up-to-date information on all real ale pubs in the branch area and beyond, please see WhatPub.com.

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INN the BORDERS

Pub News

There have been some significant pub changes in the Eastern Borders. Ben Chambers from the **Craw Inn** took over the **First and Last** at Burnmouth early in the year, but the timing of this move immediately fell foul of the COVID March lockdown. He later unfortunately had to relinquish both leases; welcome and good luck to Susan and Kimberley, who reopened the Craw early in November, and to Euan Wilson, who is now in charge at the First and Last. Euan's track record includes a recent spell as premises manager of the **Castle Hotel** in Coldstream, and he is passionate about his real ale.

All pubs in this area of the Borders have reopened to the public (in some sense),

First beer pulled at Allanton in 13 weeks!



except the **Hemelvaart Bier Café** in Ayton which, however, has been doing steady business with its beer webshop, frequent online events including beer tastings and food delivery and takeaway. The **Allanton Inn** also notched up a staggering number of takeaway meals before opening up again in July.

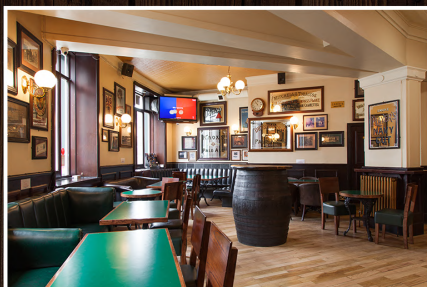
Amongst regional award-winners, the **Plough Inn** at Leitholm added to its growing collection by being named 'Best Family-run Guest Inn and Restaurant (Borders)' in the Scottish Enterprise Awards.

Moving further South and West, all pubs have been reopened except for the **Blackadder**, Greenlaw; **Red Lion**, Earlston (only the letting rooms opened) and **Rutherfords** in Kelso, which has in fact shut down and is for sale. Owners Simon and Debbie Rutherford have other ventures that they wish to pursue (and the COVID restrictions have posed particular problems for the viability of micropubs). The multiple award-winning Rutherfords will be long remembered for its trailblazing success as Scotland's first micropub and PoV wishes the Rutherfords well in the future.

From the closure of one of the newest pubs in the borders to one of the oldest:



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the 18th century **Old Thistle Inn** at Westruther (no real ale) closed its doors during the year because of the problems of trading under COVID restrictions. It had, from time to time, been mooted as a possible candidate for a community buyout, but nothing eventually came of it.

The **Carfraemill** bar, restaurant, hotel and wedding venue complex has been sold to Rob Reeley's Intuitive Group, which also runs the **Kings Arms** in Melrose and the **Goblin Ha'**, Gifford, amongst other venues. Hopefully it will continue to offer real ale.

Just up the road at Oxton, the community development company that's hoping to purchase and reopen the early 20th century **Tower Hotel** has now commissioned a full survey of the premises. This will help the group to judge the viability of their project. Planning permission to convert part of the building into offices was refused earlier in 2020 after a campaign of opposition in which CAMRA was very active.

The **Besom** in Coldstream has undergone a substantial internal refurbishment, with some of the features of historic interest being altered in a sympathetic way. An accessible toilet has been added. In nearby Birgham, Karen and Dave Miller took on the lease of the community-owned **Fisherman's Arms** over a year after the previous tenants left. Birgham has seen a recent large growth of homes in the village and it's hoped that this will help to ensure a successful future for the pub.

Roy McIntosh left the **Clovenfords Hotel** to take on the **Cross Keys** in Lilliesleaf, now the only pub in the village after the closure of the **Plough**, and has successfully reintroduced real ale. Roy has big plans for next year to develop the outside area at the rear into a bar and BBQ area. Andrew Glover and his fiancée Heather Anderson have taken over at the Clovenfords.



Rutherford's, Kelso

Borders CAMRA members have also been enjoying real ale recently at the **Ancrum Cross Keys**, the **Bourtree** in Hawick, and the **George and Abbotsford**, **Burts Hotel**, and **Kings Arms** in Melrose. At the G & A, Graham Barrett has now left the Fire Service and is a full time publican. Tempest Armadillo has been a regular cask ale here recently.

In Galashiels, the **Salmon Inn** has a newly extended outdoor area, which has pre-bookable outside tables and even a TV (no volume). Along the road, the **Hunters Hall** is also using its expanded beer garden to good effect, particularly for hardy drinkers after the indoor area closes at 8pm.

Earlier in 2020, plans emerged to reopen the **Queens Head** in Hawick, with real ale, one of the drivers being Steven Anderson, who had previously run **Brew 13** in the town. However, progress faltered due to COVID restrictions and further news of this promising development is awaited.

There's Tweed Valley news from Innerleithen, where **St Ronan's Hotel** and **Traquair Arms Hotel** have been joined as real ale outlets by the **Innerleithen Union Club**. It was selling

Harviestoun Schiehallion on its single handpump earlier this year.

Further refurbishments in Borders pubs have been reported at the **Templehall**, Morebattle (where the small lower bar has been taken out of use); **1905** in Kelso (taking out Belhaven Best to replace it with real ale!); and the **Ship** and the **Station** in Melrose. The Station has been making plans to reintroduce real ale, which is good news. The Ship and the Templehall have also taken the opportunity to completely upgrade their outside areas to attract customers during the COVID restrictions (a common theme in the area in 2020).



Tower Hotel, Oxton



Cross Keys, Lilliesleaf

Grant S House

Why change a 'noble' pub name?

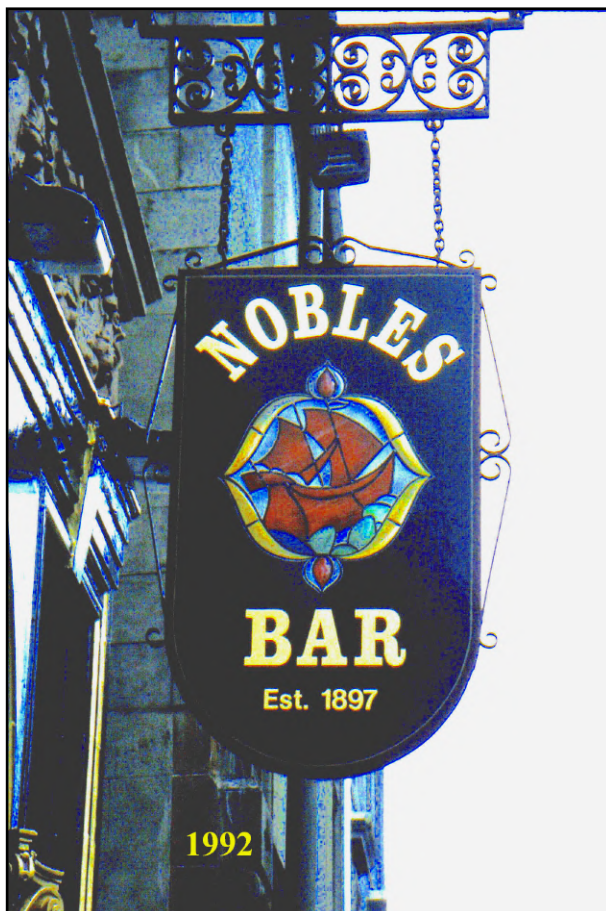
by Jim Lawrie

Nobles Bar at 44a Constitution Street, Leith is one of the the city's most famous watering holes with a most attractive and ornate Victorian exterior. The building was designed by architect William Thomson of Leith. Nobles Bar has had six different pub signs within the last fifty years and the one that was in place in the 1990s stated that 'Nobles' was established in 1897. (It did not actually open for business until May 1898.)

Archibald Noble who established it had been a wine and spirit merchant at 34 Constitution Street for several years before this. Archibald Noble was born on 13 March 1861 at Ratlichmoir near Glenfintaig within the vicinity of Loch Lochy in Inverness-shire the son of Hugh Noble, a farmer there. When Archibald Noble was in his mid-twenties he relocated to Edinburgh around 1885.

The original bar counter consisted of two long parallel sections that curved inwards but this was replaced in 1992 with a U-shaped bar counter located between the two entrance doors. Some years later the bar counter was moved once again to its present position.

Nobles has had excellent stained glass windows for many years but tragically the right-hand ground floor window was smashed around the period 1988/89 when a local lad set out to prove that 'Nobles' was just a stone's throw from Mitchell Street. It was temporarily replaced with a coloured opaque glass window and around 1990 a new style of stained glass was put in place. All three of the ground floor stained glass windows have now been replaced with plain glass.



During that period another disaster occurred – the name of the pub was changed from NOBLES to CHEQUERS! The new name was so popular it lasted just a few months.





Bright red doors in 1980.....a little less colour in 1982

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Jim Lawrie



...year 2000 with a yet another new pub sign and hand painted casks that were around for a short time.



In 2014 (above right), a change of windows, seating outdoors introduced and yet another new pub sign.



A floral display in 2015

....and more seating in 2020 to meet Leith's climate change. A new 20 mph sign because it is 2020.

With the visitation of Covid-19 Nobles has struggled along with all the others but Nobles will recover with its interesting menus.



For the discerning drinker Nobles has in recent times dispensed the Leith Juice session IPA cask-conditioned beer with an abv of 4.7% supplied by the Campervan brewery located in Jane Street, Leith.

Let's hope Nobles keeps its name!

....and adds more cask beer!

NEWS OF THE BREWS

Brewery Update

Alechemy

The brewery has added additional fermenters, bringing the total to 17. A bottling line has also been installed, and hopefully a centrifuge within the next few months. Cameron Scott from Black Wolf brewery has joined the Alechemy brewing team.

Belhaven Brewery

The brewery's Belhaven Scottish Ale was shortlisted for the Scottish Beer Awards 2020.

Bellfield Brewery

Bellfield's attractive new rebranding has been applied to their can range, including the new Daft Days Porter (5.5% abv) and Jex-Blake Mosaic IPA (5.6%).

Born Brewery

The former Born in the Borders Brewery has rebranded again to 'Born'. The beers are now known as 'Born Blonde', Born Dark', etc. The Visitor Centre at Lanton Mill has been renamed 'Born in Scotland'. Two beers are still being brewed for cask, although the whole range is available in 500ml bottles.

Broughton Brewery

All of Broughton's beers have been renamed into either the Hopo series (pale/hoppy) or the Jock series (dark/heavy). For example, Dark Dunter is now Stout Jock. The new branding was first spotted on cask in March at the **Cambridge Bar** in Edinburgh.



Campervan Brewery

In February Campervan launched the new Daily Porter on cask (5% abv), one of the first pubs to have it being **Steel Coulson** in Leith. The beer was later renamed Leith Porter.

Cross Borders Brewing Co.

Two new beers have recently been launched: Mosaic Enigma (a New England Pale, 4.3% abv); and Oatmeal Stout (5%). The brewery's



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Portobello Tap was named Best Beer Bar in the 2020 Scottish Beer Awards.

Dancehaus Brewing

This new operation describes itself as 'an Edinburgh beer company' (the company address is in Glasgow). Its beer will be targeted towards the dance music industry and is brewed at Hybrid.

Days Brewing

This is a new alcohol-free beer firm which, according to the *Scottish Licensed Trade News*, is based in Edinburgh. It has released 0.0% abv vegan lager and pale ale in bottles. One of the founders, Mike Gammell, was formerly at A-B InBev.

Edinbrew

This Livingston brewery was sadly a casualty of the COVID lockdown and has ceased production.

Edinburgh Beer Factory

Following the report in the last PoV about Futurism appearing in cask, EBF's Untitled IPA appeared on handpump at the **Haymarket** in Edinburgh. EBF has confirmed, however, that cask ale is not likely to be a regular feature.

Faking Bad Brewery

After an initial delay waiting for the hops to arrive, the new Proton Porter (5.2% abv) was eventually brewed, although the planned launch night at the **Goth** in Prestonpans was cancelled due to the COVID lockdown. It's a six-grain, two-hop beer 'with a splash of fresh root ginger'.

Ferry Brewery

Ferry has launched the first of its very impressive and attractively packaged John Martine Series bottled beers, featuring Almond Hill, Sugarbush, and most recently Black (8% abv), which was voted 'Beer of the Year' at the 2020 Scottish Beer Awards.

Hurly Burly Brewery

Early in 2020 a cask Pale Ale was launched (5% abv) – first seen at the **Dreadnought** in Leith. Due to popular demand Blimey (a Lime Sour ale) returned during the summer, along with Survivale. The latter beer was originally destined for pubs, and hence conditioned in casks, but was later (very carefully) bottled and further conditioned as a Cask Edition Session IPA. Hurly Burly's Hare of the Dog and Last Sheep Sheared were in the shortlist for the Scottish Beer Awards 2020.

Innis & Gunn Brewing Company

The company has been crowdfunding via its Beer Money campaign in order to raise £3 million for its project to build a major brewery at Riccarton.

Jump Ship Brewing

The low-alcohol brewery's first beer was Yardarm, launched late in 2019 and said to be brewed 'on the outskirts of Edinburgh'. This won Gold in the No/Low Alcohol Beers category at the 2020 Scottish Beer Awards. The beer is also vegan and gluten-free.

Knops Beer Co

As expected, Knops closed for good after its lease at the Walled Garden, Archerfield, was not renewed.

Newbarns Brewery

After initial brewing help from Kernel and Burnt Mill (and Fettle in Fife) the first beers produced wholly at the Jane St, Leith, site appeared in September,



The first three Newbarns beers

both in cans and in keg (the latter being first featured at **Mother Superior**, a stone's throw from the brewery). The latest beers from Newbarns include an 11% Export Stout and a 5% Dry Stout, both in 440ml cans.

Origin Beer Company

Origin applied for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a new microbrewery in Tower St, Leith, in February 2020, with a 35HL brewing plant along with four fermentation vessels (increasing to seven in year 3). Reports on progress are awaited. The Director and Head Brewer is Vinny Rosario.

Out of Town Brewing

This brewery was until recently located in Cumbernauld, but has recently become part of Consolidated Craft Breweries. Its beers are now made under contract by Alechemy, with OoT's business address now at the same site.

Stenroth Brewing

The official launch of Stenroth's keg beers in Glasgow at the end of 2019 was followed by an Edinburgh event at the **Stockbridge Tap**. This included the powerful Baltic Porter (7.4% abv). In November, Stenroth announced a pause in brewing to give time to get funds together and find premises to set up a bigger brewery and tap room.

Stewart Brewing

Stewart's Cauld Reekie was the Bow Bar's 2019 Dark Beer Challenge winner and duly headlined a Stewart Tap Takeover (eight cask and six keg) as part of the pub's Winter Beer Festival (remember beer festivals?).

The brewery has rebranded over the summer to a more unified appearance that centres around a modern take on classic Scottish tartan weave. That's Stewart's tartan of course!



Ferry's Almond Hill Imperial Stout



NEWS OF THE BREWS

(continued)

In November, Stewart launched a new Beer Club, featuring all one-off limited edition beers delivered monthly throughout 2021. Mini-casks were also reintroduced back into the shop which is ideal for Cask Ale lovers. Sadly a decision was made to close the Dockside Tap in Leith.

Tartan Shark

This is Edinburgh's self-proclaimed tiniest brewery, newly operating from a site near Ferry Road. Its first four bottled beers, launched early in 2020, were Robust Stout (5.8% abv), Porter (5.6%), Red Rye (5.3%) and an Amber Ale. Later some keg beers appeared, including Receding Shoreline (a 4.4% porter), featured at the **Dreadnought** in September.

Tempest Brewing Co.

Tempest has been able to keep brewing cask ale regularly during the various lockdown periods, with Armadillo and This Time Tomorrow being distributed regularly to Edinburgh, the Borders and Berwick. Several new beers have been brewed for canning and bottling, including some outstanding higher-abv beers such as Glen Noble 160/- Ale (collaboration with Pohjala, Estonia), Red Eye Bourbon Barrel and All the Leaves are Brown.

Top Out Brewery

Top Out took the opportunity during lockdown to move three of their core range into 440ml cans: Staple (4% abv), The Cone (6.8%); and the new Gipfel (a 4.8% slightly hazy pale ale). Schmankerl, Altbier, Kellerbier and Smoked Porter will remain in 500ml bottles for now.

Traquair House

Traquair has created a new range of 8.5% abv bottle-conditioned dark ruby ales based on historical figures associated with Traquair House over the past 900 years. The beers will be released over a period of time.

Vault City

Vault City will be returning to Edinburgh from Dundee, with plans to set up a 40HL brewery in Portobello. They aim to start production in January 2021. Earlier in 2020 a number of their keg beers featured in a **Bow Bar** tap takeover.

Winton Brewery

Having settled in at the former Eyeball site at West Barns, Winton has continued to produce cask, keg, bottled and canned beers. Its contenders for the Scottish Beer Awards 2020 included Stooty Fruity, Oh Ya Bassa and Peelywally, with Winton's **Station Yard** micropub in Dunbar also entered for Best Beer Bar.

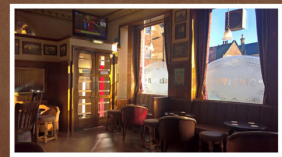


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