



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**



**Hooked  
ON ALE**

**FREE Magazine from  
the Tayside Branch of  
CAMRA  
Issue 2 2018**

**DUNDEE**

**CAMRA  
Members'  
Weekend,  
AGM &  
Conference**

**Caird Hall  
5th – 7th  
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## **Hello and welcome to the third issue of our branch magazine HOOKED ON ALE**

A lot has happened since the last edition of Hooked on Ale in March. Branch members have undertaken various tours around our area (Dundee, Perth, Angus, Perthshire and Kinross) and there was a good Tayside CAMRA turnout at the annual Scottish Real Ale Festival in Edinburgh.

CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2019 was published on the 13th September. 30 Tayside outlets are listed whittled down from over 120 in our branch area, not easy given the improving standard of pubs out there in Tayside. There continues to be a strong commitment from the majority of outlets offering real ale drinkers a wide variety of local as well as a great selection of national ales from around the UK.

Finally, next April, the Caird Hall, Dundee is the venue for CAMRA's Members Weekend, AGM & Conference with over a 1000 CAMRA members descending on Dundee. Our branch along with all other Scottish Branches are currently preparing for this event. A large number of volunteers are required to help with the setting up and running of this major event – so if you can help in any way or for more information contact secretary@tayside.camra.org.uk.

***Alex Faulds Tayside Branch Chair***

***And finally ..... a huge thank you to all our advertisers without whose  
support Hooked on Ale would not be possible.***

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**To find out more about Tayside CAMRA, visit either our website at  
tayside.camra.org.uk or Facebook page CAMRA Tayside**

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[newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk)

### Discounts for CAMRA Members

The following Tayside pubs currently offer discounts on real ale for CAMRA members.

**Perth- Glover Arms 20p per pint; The Green Room 15%**

**Dundee - Speedwell (Mennies) 10%; Taybridge Bar 10%; George Orwell 10%; Nicolls 10%  
Broughty Ferry - Royal Arch 10%**

Landlords reserve the right to remove these discounts at anytime. And remember .....when you join or renew your CAMRA membership, you receive £20 in Wetherspoon vouchers. (40 x 50p vouchers off a pint of real ale)

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## Tayside CAMRA Pub of the Year 2018 - The Green Room, Perth



On 12 May, some 50 CAMRA members descended on The Green Room **(left)** in Perth for the Scottish & Northern Ireland Branches (SNIB) meeting and SNIB AGM. Sarah Crawford (SNIB chair) quickly dealt with numerous lengthy agenda matters, after which Tayside chairman Alex Faulds presented regular barman Neil (assisted by Louisa on the day) **(below)** with the pub's well-deserved award for Tayside Pub of the Year 2018.

It was great to have CAMRA members from across Scotland and Northern Ireland gracing this quaint little pub and being warmly welcomed by a good

Tayside turnout. Sufficient breaks were permitted to sample the 6 ales to choose from which were; Alechemy Bad Day at the Office; Cromarty Raptor; Inveralmond Ossian; Loch Leven Outlaw King and Strathbraan 80 /-; Mór Morticia. One of the bar features is getting around a selection of 80 world beers. Some members were observed hitting the bottle but will have to return a few more times to complete their circuit of the whole world in the 80 beers and get the T shirt.

Although not a 'heritage' pub, the near 200 years old building does have some history as you'd guess from looking at the original columns, walls, floors and ceilings. A former brewery no less, then a granary, briefly a saddlery in the 80s, then variously named pubs since including the Granary, Charterhouse and Mucky Mulligans up to 2011. The upstairs bar opened as Green Room music bar and the current Wee bar only opened as a speciality beer bar 'Around the World' in 2015. It has always been run by mainly one barman, previously started up by Liam who had the same enthusiasm as current incumbent Neil. The original brewery would appear to have been Muir and Martin who were bought out by the better-known John Wright & Co. in 1926. They in turn were bought by the Vaux & Associated Breweries in 1961 who closed the brewery down 3 years later. The same fate became Vaux when in 1999 they made national headlines when their Sunderland brewery was closed down by an asset stripping management.



Located on Canal Crescent don't expect to find boats sailing past. The Canal was actually the medieval lade used to power the mills and which doubled as a moat next to the town wall. Long since filled in but part still remains in the Mill Street area.

As well as the ale, the Green Room is worth a visit to enjoy the open fires, craic, quizzes and blues, jazz and open mic nights upstairs. A dog friendly pub which despite a recent change of ownership continues to go from strength to strength.

If you're visiting Perth to sample the Green Room ales, you might manage to visit the other award winning 'Green' pub. The Pitcairngreen Inn is the 2017 Scottish Cider Pub of the Year and the current Tayside Cider Pub of the Year. As well as 6 ciders there are usually local ales and good food is also served. Just 30 minutes by No 14 bus it's almost door to door from Canal Street!

And, for the record, the 2018 Runner-Up was the renowned Ericht Ale House, Blairgowrie, a previous winner on the Tayside POTY on a number of occasions.

***Jim McMahon***

### **Champion Beer of Britain**

Siren Craft Brew, based in Berkshire, has won CAMRA's prestigious Champion Beer of Britain award, one of the highest accolades in the beer industry. Broken Dream Breakfast Stout (6.5% ABV) scooped gold thanks to its deep blend of chocolate, coffee and a touch of smoke. The award was made on the opening day of the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia in London. The judges commented that it stood out for its aroma, taste and finish, all of which were superb.

Silver went to Suffolk-based Green Jack Brwery's Ripper (8.5% ABV), a strong barley wine that is both dangerously smooth and yet well-hopped, and winner of CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition earlier this year.

Bronze was taken by Tyne and Wear-based Mordue Brewery for their Workie Ticket (4.5% ABV). A complex and tasty bitter, this brew boasts plenty of malt and hops and a long satisfying, bitter finish.

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## **Tayside Real Ale Pubs**

The following Pubs, Hotels and Clubs are known to sell (or recently sold) cask conditioned ale. Those known to serve real cider and perry are annotated C. Those known to serve real ale on a seasonal basis are annotated S

### **Angus**

#### **Arbroath**

Corn Exchange  
Lochlands Bar  
Old Boatyard

#### **Brechin**

Brechin Arms  
Brown Horse  
Caledonian Hotel

#### **Carnoustie**

Aboukir Hotel  
Stag's Head  
Station Hotel

#### **Finavon**

Finavon Hotel

#### **Forfar**

Dunnichen Stone  
Osnaburg  
The Stag

#### **Glen Clova**

Glen Clova Hotel

#### **Hillside (by Montrose)**

Hillside Hotel

#### **Kirkton of Glenisla**

Glenisla Hotel

#### **Kirriemuir**

Airlie Arms Hotel  
Roods Bar  
Thrums Hotel

#### **Letham**

Commercial Inn

#### **Memus**

Drovers Inn

### **Monifieth**

Grange Golf Club  
Milton Inn

### **Montrose**

George Hotel  
Market Arms

### **Dundee & District**

#### **Barnhill**

Cambustay

#### **Broughty Ferry**

Anchor  
Fisherman's  
Jolly's Hotel  
Royal Arch  
Ship Inn

#### **Dundee**

71 Brewing Taproom  
Arctic Bar  
Bank Bar  
Beer Kitchen  
Braes  
Copper Still (C)  
Counting House  
Frews Bar  
George Orwell (C)  
Market (was Lloyds)  
Pillars  
Phoenix  
Speedwell (Mennies)  
Taybridge

#### **Invergowrie**

Doubletree by Hilton

#### **Panmurefield**

Bell Tree

### **Kinross-shire**

#### **Kinross**

Loch Leven Brewery Tap  
Muir's Inn

#### **Milnathort**

Village Inn

### **Scotlandwell**

Well Inn

### **Wester Balgedie**

Balgedie Toll Tavern

### **Perth City**

Bridgend Bar  
Broxden Farm  
Capital Asset  
Cherrybank Inn  
Foundry  
Glover Arms  
The Green Room  
Greyfriars  
Kirkside Bar  
The Maltings  
Old Ship Inn  
The Sandeman  
The Tavern  
The Venue

### **East Perthshire (north of Perth & east of the A9)**

#### **Alyth**

Losset Inn

#### **Balbeggie**

Macdonald Arms Hotel

#### **Birnam**

Birnam Hotel Tap

#### **Blair Atholl**

Atholl Arms Hotel

#### **Blairgowrie**

Blairgowrie Golf Club  
Ericht Ale House  
Fair o Blair  
Royal Hotel  
Stormont Arms

#### **Blairgowrie (Rattray)**

Old Cross Inn



## **Dunkeld**

Atholl Arms Hotel  
Royal Dunkeld Hotel  
Perth Arms  
Taybank Hotel

## **Glenshee**

Dalmunzie Hotel

## **Kirkmichael**

Kirkmichael Hotel  
Strathardle Inn

## **Meikle**

Kinloch Arms

## **Meikleour**

Meikleour Arms Hotel

## **Moulin**

Moulin Inn

## **Murthly**

Uisge Bar/Restaurant

## **Pitlochry**

Auld Smiddy  
McNabs  
McKays  
Old Mill Inn  
Pitlochry Golf Club  
Scotland's Hotel

## **Scone**

Wheel Inn  
Perth Race Course\*

## **West Perthshire (north of**

## **Perth & west of A9)**

### **Aberfeldy**

Black Watch  
Schiehallion

### **Bankfoot**

Bankfoot Inn

### **Comrie**

Bothy Bar, Royal Hotel

### **Crieff**

Quaich Bar  
Tower Gastro Pub  
Fortingall Hotel

### **Kenmore**

Courtyard Restaurant  
(Taymouth Mains)

### **Lawers**

Ben Lawers Hotel

### **Pitcairngreen**

Pitcairngreen Inn (C)

## **Milnathort**

Village Inn **Weem**  
Ailean Chraggan

## **South Perthshire (south of Perth)**

### **Abernethy**

Crees Inn

### **Aberuthven**

Smiddy Haugh Hotel

### **Auchterarder**

Craigrossie Hotel  
Auchterarder Golf Club

### **Bridge of Earn**

Cyprus

### **Dunning**

Kirkstyle Inn

### **Glendevon**

Tormaukin Hotel

### **Glen Farg**

Bein Inn

If your local pub, hotel or even club serves 'real ale' or 'real cider or perry' and is not included in this listing please let us know.

**\*Perth Race Course** - check website for events when real ale available.

## **Vegan Beer Update**

My article in the last edition of Hooked on Ale painted a mixed picture for the future, but provided relatively few beers that were both real ale and vegan friendly, especially from Tayside.

Apart from specialist milk stouts and honey beers, the unacceptability of regular beers is all down to the use of finings, mainly isinglass, used to remove yeast by causing the cells to clump and drop out of suspension. Yet so long as we are content to drink real ales of a cloudy appearance, then finings need not be used. Law Brewing in Dundee, and Windswept from up north are increasingly serving their beers unfinned and cloudy.

I asked the question "which beers are vegan-friendly" at this year's Scottish Real Ale Festival; I was shown a manual listing all the unfinned beers, but this was produced from the food allergy perspective. Few of the vegan beers were accredited as such, or marketed to vegans, and the identity was not generally displayed on dispense. With the recent publicity about food allergies in sandwiches, it surprises me that the potential to cause allergic reactions does not bring about more prominent labelling of fish products, including isinglass, as well as gluten, at the point of draught dispense.

(continued on page 11)

## **Yes ....I've been to the Bein Inn!**

In the last issue of Hooked on Ale I told you about a pub, that I have passed on my commute from Kirkcaldy to Perth, the Bein Inn. It enjoys a picturesque location on the A912, not far south of Perth in wooded Glen Farg. I'd also explained, that this was a pub that I had never been in. I kept my promise, and since the last issue was published, I have visited the pub.

I walked into a very quiet bar. There was a gang of travelling builders in who had travelled from 'down South' to do 'a job' in the area and staying in the pubs adjoining rooms. They were happily relaxing after a hard day's graft, sipping their icy cold Tennants lager. I walked to the Bar, and the man behind the bar simply said, 'Can I help you?', I don't think he was expecting a customer. I ordered my permitted half pint of Inverlmond Brewery, Ossian, but only after I'd done a quick calculation in my head that it was just over 1 unit of alcohol. My car was outside you see, and with one bus every 90 minutes, I had to take the car.

The man behind the bar was Will, who turned out to be the manager. I asked him how he thought about the law, which came into force in November 2014 which made the legal drink-drive limit in Scotland lower than elsewhere in the UK had affected his business. The change reduced the legal alcohol limit from 80mg to 50mg in every 100ml of blood.

He told me about his group of friends, they all lived in Fife but worked further afield, and always met up on their respective ways home. 'There were eight of us, we used to go in the same pub, every night after our shifts. We used to have one pint each, swap stories, share experiences and then go home, but now we just don't go, it's not worth the risk' he explained. 'The pub is seven gallons down on its wet sales a week now, and that's just our group, there were more like us'. He said that the same effect was felt at the Bein Inn. 'People used to come in for a meal, with their families and enjoy a single pint, but now the driver can't have one drink, we're not selling the food or generating sales on the bar'.

In January this year the Scottish Licensed Trade Association said that City centre pubs had reported a slump in the office trade, with a drop in the numbers of people popping in for a pint after work and lunchtime bar sales down as well. But rural pubs and golf clubs are among those hardest hit by the change, with many citing the minimum wage as another factor weighing on their business. A survey of industry trends by the SLTA found that 44 % of rural outlets saw their takings fall by up to 10% in the first six months of 2016. This was off the back of a reported 40% fall in takings for operators in remote areas during 2015.



I am in no way condoning drink driving and fully support any legislation that reduces death on the roads and the subsequent heartache that damages far too many families after the loss of a loved one. But I will be speaking with MSPs at the end of November to lobby the Scottish Government to launch a review into the impact of the drink driving policy on the pub sector in order to develop proposals to support affected pubs and improve public transport in rural areas. Will we get one... only time will tell!

***Sarah Crawford (left) Scotland & Northern Ireland Regional Director***



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### **Vegan Beer Update (continued)**

Bottle labels, however, are increasingly listing gluten in the ingredients, and stating when unfined. Once the label displays allergens in bold for processing aids like finings, as well as ingredients, vegans should be confident that they can consume the beer, along with those likely to suffer allergies.

Furthermore, if beer is unfiltered and the bottle unpasteurised, then it should qualify as RAIB (real ale in bottle). Several breweries in Tayside are thought to provide regular RAIB, but it really does need a full audit by the CAMRA BLO (brewery liaison officer) to find out if they are vegan friendly too. Mor, Strathbraan, and probably Abernethy amongst Tayside breweries come under this category. Yet standing out is Kinrossshire's new Blunt Chisel Brewery. Their beers are unfined (kettle finings, auxiliary and isinglass not used). Bottles have a tight sediment, which allows the beer to be poured clear into the glass. This is vegan real ale in bottle as it should be, but supplies are very limited, and for now you will need to get along to Kinross Farmer's Market to find them.

***Richard Barnes***

\*\*\*\*\*

Ed: As we went to press, Richard had just returned from a trip to Riga in Latvia where there are a lots of developments in the local brewing scene. Richard has promised an article about his trip for the next issue of Hooked on Ale which we expect to appear in May 2019 after the Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference in Dundee next April.

## Spotlight on the Moulin Brewery - Pitlochry

Located in Moulin village on the outskirts of Pitlochry and in the shadow of Ben Vrackie, the Moulin Brewery (**right**) first opened in time for the 'glorious twelfth' of 1995. The late Chris Tomlinson (the owner at the time) had seen successful pub breweries in England and having given some thought to the Moulin Inns past history, he believed that there must have been a local brewhouse in operation providing the Moulin with ale. Chris felt that it only seemed fitting that the pubs 300th anniversary was celebrated by starting to brew on-site again. At the time, Moulin Brewery was one of the first microbreweries in Scotland, now there are in excess of 130.



The building housing the brewery was originally the coach house & stables for the Pitlochry to Kirkmichael coach service, the roof space being 'lads' accommodation. In more recent years it had been a cattle byre and then became the dump for old hotel furniture & fittings.

With no brewing expertise, a consultancy company was hired who installed the equipment and procured a number of sample recipes, based on the then existing knowledge of the various real ales sold in the pub. Scots seemed to like slightly sweeter ale, also a little darker than the norm. The Moulin's first two brews (codenamed A & B), were tried out in the pub at 50p per pint and very successful they were too. The darker ale was chosen, to be served alongside regular ales such as Marston's Pedigree, Tetley's and Old Speckled Hen. A competition for a name was held and the winner won a bottle of whisky, for Ale of Atholl (4.5% ABV) - simply taking the 'V' out of Vale of Atholl, the local area.

A second brew, lighter in strength and colour of ingredients, was developed at the time the Mel Gibson film, Braveheart (4% ABV) was being made. With the onset of winter, the brewery sought to produce a stronger winter warmer. For this they increased the strength but not the maltiness, and added one pound, per gallon, of local honey to the Ale of Atholl recipe and ended up with the super smooth Old Remedial (5.4% ABV) - named by the North British Rowing Club who were staying in the hotel at that time.



The bar now sported three own beers and one outside real ale, Boddingtons. However, sales of 'Boddies' plunged dramatically against the Moulin ales, so the brewery sought to copy it by experimenting with more wheat and no darker malts at all, and once again a distinctive ale was successfully produced. Light Ale (3.7% ABV) summed it up, and there were no longer any requests for other ales, other than the Moulin's own, to be sold.



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Call us on 01796 472196



[www.moulinhotel.co.uk](http://www.moulinhotel.co.uk)





Mike Mudie the brewer (**left**) for the past 11 years adheres rigidly to the established recipes and methods in order to achieve great consistency in the brews. Mike came to the Moulin Brewery after a shortish period of retirement having previously worked at Blair Atholl (Bell's) distillery (in Pitlochry not Blair Atholl!) for many years. The vast majority of production is sold across the road from the brewery in the Moulin Inn, although a good amount is sent five miles up the road to Blair Atholl where it is available in the Bothy Bar located in the Atholl Arms Hotel.

Brewing on demand for the two main outlets, Mike has an established routine: casks are usually filled on Monday, brewing takes place Tuesday to Thursday and then on Friday cask washing and general brewery duties take place. In addition to one mash tun and one 'kettle', there are 2 x 400lt and 2 x 200lt fermentation vessels (**right**) capable of producing approximately 1200lts per week. The brewery has the capacity to bottle up to 20 cases an hour with hotel staff often been called upon to lend a hand as and when required. Beer for bottling is pumped up to tanks in the roof space, left to settle, and then fed by gravity to the bottling machine.



The brewery first started bottling Ale of Atholl in 1999 and the other ales are also available in bottles which can be purchased at either the Moulin and Atholl Arms hotels and also at other local outlets including the House of Bruar and Robertsons of Pitlochry.

Although space for expansion is fairly limited, owner Heather Reeves is looking at ways to increase the profile of the brewery and enhance the visitor experience.

The Moulin Brewery and Moulin Inn are firm favourites on the Pitlochry tourist trail especially given the close proximity to Edradour Distillery just under two miles away and with the magnificent Ben Vrackie and other local walks attracting many hill walkers to the area. Free Brewery Tours are available from 10am to 4pm Monday - Friday. Tastings are available in Moulin Inn although groups of over 6 are requested to phone to book a tour. The Moulin bar offers a tasting flight of three 1/3rd pints for a reasonable £3.70.

**Martin Fox**



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## Tayside Pub News

So far 2018 has seen a fair number of changes in the Tayside Real Ale scene with both good and bad news. First the good news about additions to the Real Ale scene.

- **Kinloch Arms**, Meigle under new ownership with two hand-pumps selling guest ales.
- The **Tower**, Crieff with two hand-pumps selling locally sourced ales.
- The **Glenisla Hotel** has reopened selling 2 changing ales.
- The **Ericht Alehouse** lounge has been renovated. As should be expected with the Ericht, ales are as good as they've always been.
- **Capital Asset** in Perth now has an additional hand-pump bring their total up to 6 (the largest number in the Fair City).
- The **Scone Arms** is due to reopen shortly with a new sign on the outside wall suggesting 'Cask Ales' will be available. With doubts about the future of the **Wheel Inn**, hopefully real ale will continue to be available in Scone.
- **Old Ship**, Perth now regularly selling 2 out of either Schiehallion, Jarl or Bitter and Twisted alongside its long-established house ale. Tina's now been there 9 years which makes her 2nd longest serving mine host since Andy in the 90s.
- Frank (formerly of Green Room) staying loyal to the cause has one hand-pump dispensing Strathbraan ales in his **Venue** bar Perth.
- **Bein Inn**, Glenfarg has reopened and is selling Loch Leven ales.
- **Crees Inn** has also reopened with quite a transformation from the old bar.
- In Dundee, the **Copper Still** with 1 changing beer often from Fife microbreweries.
- **Pillars** (one hand-pump) and **Arctic Bar** (two hand-pumps), both Dundee, making an effort with real ale, so if not available when you visit, encourage them to get some more in.
- Also worth noting is that Tayside now sports two Tap Rooms; one in Kinross and the other in Dundee. **Loch Leven Brewery** ales which are selling well in Perth area can be sampled at their brewery tap in Kinross conveniently situated close to the express bus stop. Although currently selling keg beers the **71 Tap Room** in Dundee is doing well. They have started producing cask ales which have been seen in the Speedwell (Mennies), Dundee and the Green Room, Perth

On the other side of the coin, the bad news about pubs which have stopped selling ale.

- Some pubs tried briefly to introduce real ale but then gave up. These were **Victoria**, Coupar Angus and **Dickens**, Perth.
- The really bad news being some pubs which sold real ale for a while but are no longer doing so, such as the **Ardler Tavern**.
- **Craigvrack** in Pitlochry sadly now converted to a guest house.

However, it would appear that overall the good news outweighs the bad news. George Street in Perth hasn't been the same since the Kings Arms closed but will shortly host a pub again with the soon to be opened Brewdog.

Tayside CAMRA welcomes any feedback on pub changes either by notifying us through What-Pub (see page 25) or directly by email to [outlets@tayside.camra.org.uk](mailto:outlets@tayside.camra.org.uk). If you are aware of any changes to or errors in the Tayside pub listing on page 8, again, please contact us by emailing [outlets@tayside.camra.org.uk](mailto:outlets@tayside.camra.org.uk).



## **Good Pint??.....Bad Pint?? Good Beer Guide Pub Selection**

Early next year CAMRA branches across the country will begin selecting the pubs which will appear in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide (GBG) 2020 Edition. What you may not know is how those pubs are selected to appear in the Guide. GBG selection is often a very difficult task and can occasionally lead to heated discussion amongst branch members. The beer scores submitted on WhatPub by CAMRA members from all over the country are an important aid in helping local branches with their deliberations.

In Tayside, our GBG quota is only 30 entries and we have to whittle down our selection from well over 120 real ale pubs and hotels, many of which are worthy of GBG selection. It's important to note that just because a pub is not listed in the GBG doesn't mean that it isn't worth a visit.

With Tayside CAMRA covering such a large area and with many rural pubs, we can't be everywhere all the time, so we rely on the feedback CAMRA members give us which in turn can help inform our annual selection of Tayside pubs for the Good Beer Guide. If you are a CAMRA member and you've wondered why your favourite pub isn't in the Guide, this may well be because you, and others, haven't entered scores rating the quality of beer there. By beer scoring, you contribute to the process of selection of pubs that go in the Good Beer Guide.

Beer scoring on WhatPub is easy, just log in as a CAMRA member and get your opinions known with scores from 0 being No Real Ale to 5 the perfect pint! It's very useful for your local branch as the National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is fully integrated with WhatPub and the branch can review the results from the NBSS and see which pubs are doing well or indeed badly.

You can use WhatPub to search for pubs across the UK and view opening times, descriptions and details of the real ale and ciders on offer. The mobile version also has the facility to find a nearby pub should you be somewhere that is not familiar.

If you are a CAMRA member, you can also help your local branch by checking that the information held on WhatPub or in the GBG is accurate. If you find any discrepancies, you can notify amendments to the appropriate CAMRA branch by submitting updates on WhatPub.

Over 191,000 members have access to WhatPub and that's what makes it so much different and we think better than any other online guide!

\*\*\*\*\*

The Good Beer Guide 2019 was published in September. To find out which Tayside pubs are included amongst the 4500 entries from across the whole UK (England, Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland, Channel Islands & IoM) why not treat yourself to a copy which can be purchased on the CAMRA website at a special member's rate. In addition to the pub listing there is a unique Breweries section listing all UK real-ale breweries and their regular beers, along with hundreds of CAMRA tasting notes,



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## Kenny Smiths' Big Day Out – The Scottish Real Ale Festival, Edinburgh

Thursday July 5th, just after 09:00, and I'm making my way to Dundee Railway Station to meet up with the rest of the Bank Bar 'Thirstday' group to attend the Scottish Real Ale Festival in the Corn Exchange in Edinburgh. On arrival at the station, all was in darkness. "No electricity mate - just go through and pay on the train". An inauspicious start to the day! Once I'd done my famous impersonation of a train spotter, I waited at platform 3 for the troops to arrive, first Gregor, then Mike and finally Garry. We entrained on the 09:44 Dundee - Edinburgh (158 732 (52732) in place of the usual 170 due to rolling stock shortages caused by the late delivery of the class 385's).

After a laboured journey we rolled into Haymarket, eschewing the lure of Ryries, our native guide (Mike) shepherded us to the bus stop on Dalry Rd where Tom (from the Thirstday group Perthshire sub-branch) was delaying the No. 4 for us. Passing the Caledonian Brewery, we arrived at Slateford railway station, where it seemed the whole bus got off. Risking life and limb of this bustling metropolis, we managed across the roads and Mike and I were dispatched to ASDA to get some "nibbly things" to keep us sustained ("man cannot live by beer alone") during our ordeal.

While in the queue, enjoying the banter, poor Gregor was assaulted by the Edinburgh pollen although a couple of ales once inside the venue soon sorted him out. On paying our entry fee, and having our membership cards scanned, we collected tumblers & the essential 'fixture' list and headed for the hall. On entry you are faced by a U-shaped bar, with the cider bar across the top, seating areas to the right, pub games in the left corner and CAMRA stalls down the left. The stage and food stall were located at the far end of the hall, and there is an outside seating/smoking area and an atrium in the top left corner. We took our seats at a table occupied by a few Edinburgh & South-East branch members that Mike was acquainted with. Perusing the list of 164 ales, 25 ciders & 4 perries, we made our selection; some of us have a set plan, others just go with the flow.

The beer ranged from 2.8% ABV Drei Hopped Rye (Top Out) to 9.5% 160/- Vintage Ale (Traquair). Tayside breweries were represented by Inveralmond, Law, Loch Leven, MòR & Strathbraan alongside Cairn O' Mohr cider. Unfortunately, the ales from Law Brewing (RUDE BOY JUICE 5.2% & MOD IPA 5.5%) hadn't settled so we were unable to try them. There was a free T-shirt to be had if you sampled 6 ales from 10 specified breweries, and being a sucker for a free t-T-shirt ... I did, with the aid of those who weren't taking part but were having an ale from the requisite brewery, manage to get one. Between us we sampled at least 36 different ales and we voted for ale of the festival thus:

Garry	Shore Dulse Stout 7.0% ABV	Lacada
Gregor	Musselburgh Smoke 4.5% ABV	Knops
Mike	The Coal Road 5.1% ABV	Kingdom
Tom	Happy Chappie 4.1% ABV	Cromarty
Kenny	Deep Groat 4.8% ABV	John O' Groats

As we were on "off peak" tickets, we had to be back at Haymarket for the 16:34 train. Leaving Tom on the bus to find his own way home (which he managed to do), we alighted at Haymarket in time to catch the 170 418 (79418). A brisk journey home and we were back in the Bank Bar by 18:00 and with four pints of March of the Penguins (4.9% from Williams Bros.) to round off a cracking day ... it's already pencilled in for next year.

**Kenny Smith**

## Alein Vannin

Ellan Vannin – the Isle of Man's Manx name – is a unique place. It is outside the EU, has its own language (defunct but being revived), parliament (Tynwald), bank notes, stamps and beer purity law. There's a lot of money hidden away in its banks and the discreet country mansions, but many quaint aspects of retro culture exist: the trams, fruit juice as a starter, flypapers instead of electrocuters in some pubs.

I'd always fancied a visit but had never got around to it until a friend suggested a coach trip. Given that real ale never disappeared in the '60's and 70's, as it did in many parts of the British Isles, and coach travel frees up opportunities for sampling it, I immediately agreed.



We were booked into the Hydro Hotel towards the north end of the lengthy promenade in Douglas, the capital. Douglas has a population of just under 28,000 and being a tourist centre, a vast number of pubs and hotels, most selling cask beer. It has 10 entries in the 2018 Good Beer Guide: pretty good for a community of that size. There are four breweries on the island, the long-established Bushy's and Okell's and the newer Hooded Ram (**left**) and Old Laxey, a microbrewery in a pub. The hotel did not

have the best accommodation and catering I've experienced, but a friendly staff and a hand pump



  
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GOLDEN ALE

  
**LIA FAIL**  
RICH MALTY  
AMBER ALE

  
**INVERALMOND**  
BREWERY

  
**E.P.A.**  
VIBRANT HOPPY  
EDINBURGH PALE ALE

  
**DARACHA**  
OAK MATURED  
RUBY SCOTCH ALE

**FROM THE HEART OF SCOTLAND**

in the bar selling a consistently good pint of Bushy's Manx Bitter were redeeming features.



As will be seen, despite the proliferation of cask beer, some of it could prove elusive! My first attempt to visit a GBG pub was frustrating. We had decided to take a trip on the narrow-gauge steam railway from Douglas to Port Erin in the south west of the island and arrived at the picturesque station in good time for a pint. The Hooded Ram At Clinch's, the brewery tap, is just across the road from the station (the brewery is visible across the harbour/river) and seemed an obvious choice. However, despite the

alleged opening time of 11.00 am, there was still no sign of life at 12.30, so I went across the road to the Railway Bar for a very good pint of Okell's MPA before train time.

We enjoyed the journey through the beautiful countryside, past the Fairy Bridge where it's customary to greet the Wee Folk before crossing, the airport and King William's College (home of the fiendish annual general knowledge quiz), arriving in Port Erin in time for a pint of Bushy's Manx Bitter at the GBG-listed Falcon's Nest Hotel.

In the evening I set out for the Hooded Ram but got waylaid in the Albert Hotel in the centre by a friendly Manxman. I tried the Bushy's Ruby Mild for a change which was OK, but not really to my taste though I usually enjoy milds. The Bushy's Bitter in the Old Market Inn (**above left**) next door was more reassuring.

Having had a few trips on the horse-drawn trams along the promenade – on a return ticket you can travel up and down all day – we had to try the Electric Tramway which runs from Douglas to Ramsey with a branch going up Snaefell, Man's highest mountain. We changed trams at Laxey and proceeded to the summit – a wonderfully scenic journey. Hazy skies meant we couldn't see all the Seven Realms (Man, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Heaven & The Sea) and there was no draught ale in the café at the top, but we did get a fine view of a young peregrine falcon that seemed to enjoy sitting on a post watching the trams! And of course, we had to have a pint at the Mines Tavern (**right**) by Laxey station – Okell's Bitter, arguably the best-served pint of the holiday. The Bridge Inn (**below left**) down the road has Bushy's beers and is another GBG entry.



The following day the coach took us down to the south of the island, visiting the pleasant little community of Castletown – alas, leaving before the one GBG pub, the Castle Arms (**overleaf**) by the river, was due to open. It looked a great pub and I shall make a point of going there on any future visit. We stopped a while by the Sound, the strait separating the Calf, a small island wildlife sanctuary, from the mainland. I saw plenty of guillemots, gulls

and ravens, but none of the hoped-for hen harriers which breed there.

On again through Port St Mary which has three GBG pubs, back to Port Erin in time for lunch at the Station Hotel – non-GBG but providing a very good pub lunch and an excellent pint of Okell's IPA. After descending a precipitous hill to visit the Bridge Bookshop at the south end of the small bay – well worth the climb back up – we rejoined the coach and returned to Douglas.



The next day we travelled round the centre and north of Man, largely following the route of the TT races which had been held some weeks earlier, with many of the roadside seats and stands remaining. We stopped at Peel on the west coast, with its beaches and castle, wandering through its old, winding streets and ending up with some Coach House Innkeeper's Special Reserve at the Marine Hotel (GBG listed) on the front. The next stop was Ramsey, after travelling through rich farmland and past a few of the aforementioned mansions. Two GBG entries here: the Mitre and the Trafalgar Hotel. The latter was the one we spotted, on the quay by the river, and I was pleased to see Moorhouse Black Cat on sale as I hadn't seen it for ages. Described as a dark mild, it seems to me like a lower gravity stout, and went down very well.

On the way back, the road mainly followed the tramway, stopping at the foot of the glen to allow the fitter members to walk up the hill to the impressive Laxey Wheel, formerly used for pumping water out of the copper mines. I took advantage of this, having been Impressed by pictures in my childhood. Unfortunately, there was no time to walk down to Old Laxey, where lies the brewpub the Shore Hotel (**below**), but I mention this for future reference. I had to make do with another pint of Bushy's in the hotel.

The next day was our last and we spent it travelling on the horse trams and wandering around the town centre. I sought out the Rover's Return in Church Street, mainly because it was the only pub of that name I'd encountered outside "Coronation Street". I tried the Bushy's Ruby Mild again, but still didn't find it to my taste, so settled for a satisfactory pint of Piston Bitter. I hadn't managed



to visit two GBG pubs at the north end of the prom, the Queen's Hotel and the Terminus, despite their proximity to our hotel, so this was partly rectified by a visit to the Queen's where Moorhouse's Pride of Pendle went down well. This was in good nick, like the vast majority of ales sampled on the holiday, but my friend was disappointed to find they didn't do Pina Colada: "Wrong end of the prom, mate!" – another retro touch, perhaps?

All in all, it was a good week, even though I didn't manage to sample all the local beers. I'll just have to go back sometime, maybe after a judicious scrutiny of Tripadvisor.

**Forbes Browne**

**Ed:** A big thankyou to David Halliwell Isle of Man CAMRA for providing the photos for this article. For more information if you are planning a trip to the IoM visit <http://isleofmancamra.org>



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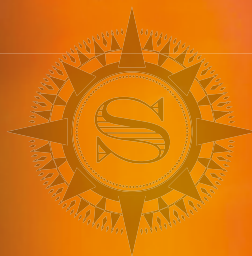
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## **Further Adventures of The Bank Bar 'Thirstday' Group**

Since the last issue of Hooked on Ale, members of the Thirstday group have departed their Bank Bar haven on a variety of adventures ...

Jaunts around Dundee have been made to The Beer Kitchen, Copper Still, Counting House, George Orwell, Market, "Mennie's", Phoenix & Pillars.

Foreign travel has been to :- Arbroath, Blairgowrie, Carnoustie (several times), Forfar, Letham, Monifieth, Perth & Stirling.

Beer/Ale Festivals attended :- Alba (@ Royal Tay Yacht Club), GRAF (Glasgow), Kingdom of Fife (Glenrothes), Larbert, Perth Rugby Club, Scottish (Edinburgh), Blairgowrie Rugby Club and the Fife & Tayside Beer Fest (St Andrews Brewing).

Thirstday stalwarts also made a trip to the central belt to undertake the Forth Valley branches "Mild Ale Trail".

The group normally get together around 14:00 / 14:30 and are usually in the Bank Bar until about 16:00 / 17:00. So, if you are at a loose end on a 'Thirstday', enjoy a good pint and craic, why not pop along to the Bank Bar where a warm welcome awaits you?

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### **CAMRA Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference Dundee 5th - 7th April 2019**

2019 sees a particular CAMRA event returning to Scotland for the first time in 14 years and for only the fifth time ever. The Members' Weekend, the main aspects of which are the Annual General Meeting and Conference, has been to Edinburgh twice (1984 and 1998), Aberdeen (1989) and Glasgow (2005) and it is about time it returned to Scotland, with Dundee being the host venue in 2019. The AGM is where the formal business of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited is transacted, such as the Finance Director's report and the appointment of auditors. Any Special Resolutions to change our articles of association and the election for the National Executive, CAMRA's board of directors, also forms part of the AGM. Conference is where policies are adopted, changed or abandoned.

Members' Weekends are invariably run as regional events, notwithstanding the actual venue, and 2019 will be no different with members from all parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland expected to be involved in the organisation of the event. Although the Members' Weekend runs from the 5th to the 7th of April, the work to set it up will start earlier that week, with the Members' Bar the focal point of the social aspect of the weekend. The Members' Bar will showcase the best real ales Scotland and Northern Ireland have to offer as well as a smattering of ciders and/or perries. Obviously, we will need members to order and cellar the beer, cider and perry, build both the stillage required for the beers and cider and the bars, as well as actually selling the beer and cider. While the organising committee will be beaver away between now and the Members' Weekend ensuring everything will be alright on the night, as they say, there will be a requirement for local members – and by that I mean from branches in Scotland and Northern Ireland – to help out on site by building the bars, cellaring the beers and making sure all the hand pumps are set up to dispense the beer, cider and perry.

Over the course of the weekend, many more volunteers are required for a variety of jobs, not just serving at the bar. We will require people to help attendees find the room they are looking for, count the votes for and against motions in the case of it being too close to call and also to chaperone the brewery visits which form an integral part of the social side of the weekend. So, even if people don't like working behind the bar, and many don't, there will be plenty of opportunities to help out in other aspects of the weekend to ensure attendees get the most out of it.

***Colin Valentine***

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## Tayside CAMRA visits York

Following on from a successful trip last year to Birmingham – Alex Faulds, Frank Mills & Ray Kelly decided this year to make a trip to the City of York. September was the chosen time, coinciding with the 10th York Beer & Cider Festival. After a long drive down from Dundee via Perth, we arrived in York around 3pm and in need of a pint, and after a quick freshen up we decided to try a few of the pubs which were close by the Fishergate. Forgetting about the different opening times, the first three we tried Edinburgh Arms, Woolpack and Sea Horse were closed at the time, so we ventured through the Fishergate Bar (one of six gateways in the city walls) and onto our first stop the Phoenix Inn (**left**). An independently run pub which is a haven for real and live jazz, and arguably one of the oldest pubs in York! 4 of the 5 handpumps were available and on offer was TT Landlord, Parts and Labour (an American Pale Ale at 5.4%) from Roosters Brewery, Golden Pippin from the Copper Dragon Brewery (Keighley) - a 3.9% blonde ale and Big Sky from Wold Top Brewery (Hunmandby) an amber hoppy ale also at 3.9%. We chose the latter 3 and they were in excellent condition, so we stayed for a couple.



We then moved on to the Masons Arms (**right**) a short walk back on to the Fishergate ( [www.masonsarmsyork.co.uk](http://www.masonsarmsyork.co.uk) ), a friendly pub which overlooks the River Foss. Pub features include oak panelling from York Castle and a fireplace from the castle gatehouse. Unfortunately, choice of beer was not great, with our initial choice of Classic Blonde a 3.9% Blonde Ale from Westgate Brewery Wakefield) having to be exchanged for Black Sheep Bitter. Time was getting on, so we decided to take a taxi to the Beer Festival on York Knavesmire. We knew it was a big festival but when you walk towards the Marquee which was set up in the new Clocktower Enclosure opposite the main stand, it was a site to behold. The choice of beer was amazing and in the available time we had, difficult to choose from. Stouts and Red Ales were our choice of the day with Harrogate Plum Porter, and an American Red Ale from Brotherhood Brewery (Wiltshire) excellent beers. At this point it was getting late and hunger was setting in, so we took a taxi back to the Fishergate for some food, before returning to the Phoenix Inn for the Jazz



Evening. A few pints of Nethergate Old Growler, and fantastic jazz music provided a great end to the day.



Day 2 and after a light breakfast we headed towards Lawrence Street, which is just south of Walmgate, passing the York Barbican and, to check out three pubs which were unfortunately closed at the time (The Rose & Crown, The Wagon & Horses and The Rook & Gaskill which is the current York Branch Pub of the Year). So, we headed up Walmgate and onto Fossgate to our first stop of the day, the Blue Bell (**left**) – which had been in the news recently regarding Punch Taverns and its long-term landlord.

It is still a wonderful pub and a must visit to York with its unaltered 1903 interior (York's only Grade II\* Listed Edwardian décor pub). On tap were TT Landlord, Bradfield Farmers Blonde, Rudgate Ruby Mild, Kelham Island





Best Bitter, Roosters 'The Wanderer', Brew York Viking DNA and Hop Studio Pale. The Ruby Mild and Farmers Blonde were in excellent form, so we stayed for a couple, before heading on our way along the shortest street in York 'Whip-Ma-Whop-Ma-Gate'. Our next stop was The Last Drop Inn, one of five York Brewery Pubs. It is a split-level single bar with wood and brick interior and large windows providing views to Kings Square. Apart from beers by York Brewery, on offer was Shepherds Warning by Wild Weather Ales, Heathen by Abbeydale, Black Night Oatmeal Stout from Ridgeside and Rising Tide from Turning Point Brew Co, from which we

chose the Black Night and Rising Tide, both excellent beers. Turning right out of the Last Drop we continued along Lower Petergate towards York Minster before turning left into Stonegate and our next destination The House of Trembling Madness (the oldest of two outlets, with their second located on Lendal Street).

Located above a bottled beer shop (choice of beers in the shop is unbelievable) is this wonderful medieval drinking hall with a beamed timber roof. Event Horizon a cherry oatmeal stout from Wilde Child Brewing Co (Leeds) and Lord Marples from Thornbridge were the choice. At this point we decided to have some lunch; two of us had Sausage, Mash and Peas with the third member having the Cheese Board. Before we left we had a quick look around the beer shop. By this time the rain was back on again as we headed along Stonegate towards our next stop which was to be the Maltings, however the rain was now torrential, so we diverted to the 'The new Trembling Madness' on Lendal, a former Georgian Town house which extends over five floors. Here we had pints of Northern Monk Striding Edge IPA (Cask) and Odyssey 'There is just the table beer' (Craft). Once the rain had eased, we moved onto our intended destination – The Maltings on Tanners Moat, just off Station Road. With Seven real ales and four traditional ciders to choose from, beautifully presented interior and a city centre location, its ever popular with locals and tourists alike. As expected the place was extremely busy, but we managed to grab some seats with our beers of choice, Thornbridge 'St Louis' a 7% American Porter and Higsons Amber Ale (4.1%). We ended up staying for three pints it was that good. Getting late and hunger setting in we grabbed a taxi back to the Fishergate and went for a Chinese at the Regency Chinese on Barbican Road.

We then returned to the Phoenix Inn for a nightcap or two with Wold Top Big Sky and TT Landlord the choice of the night. Heading back to our accommodation we decided to stop off at the Sea Horse Hotel (Samuel Smiths Brewery Pub) where we had Old Brewery Bitter at a very reasonable £2.00 / pint.

Day 3 saw the arrival of a fourth member Stephen Robertson, who travelled from Perth that morning, arriving in time for us to go for some breakfast at the nearby Wetherspoons, the Postern Gate. From here we took a taxi up to the Micklegate, starting off at The Micklegate at 127, a large open plan pub (Amber Taverns) where we all had the house ale '127', which was an average pint in comparison to others we have had on our trip so far. Next stop was



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Brigantes (**previous page lower**) where they offer a range of 8 cask and 10 keg ales including from York Brewery -as it hasn't got far to travel (literally in their back yard!). On this occasion 7 of the 8 pumps were on. Tiny Rebel 'Juicy' at 4.8% and Brass Castle 'Misfit' at 4.3% were our chosen beers. Our next destination was the York Brewery Tap, which as mentioned earlier is at the rear of the Brigantes and the barmaid kindly assisted us by taking us through the back of the pub and into the 'York Tap'. The Tap Room is upstairs in the heart of the brewery and has a comfortable "lived in" feel with wooden beams, wooden barrels for tables and some extremely comfy armchairs in an adjoining extension. We stayed for a couple of beers with 'Otherside' IPA at 4.5% and Centurions Ghost, a Dark Ruby Ale at 5.4% going down well along with a couple of the brewery blends.

From the Brewery Tap we returned to the Micklegate and The Artful Dodger - a narrow pub with a long bar and scenes from Oliver Twist painted on the walls. It is one of the later stages in the infamous 'Micklegate run' and regularly hosts a rock and metal night. However, on this occasion it was quiet, and out of the two available beers (Anth-rats from Rat Brewery and Schafkopf from Blackjack Brewery) it was Anth-rats all round. A short distance from the Artful Dodger is a wonderful historic city centre pub, hidden off the beaten track down the narrow cobbled St Martins Lane. The Ackhorne is partially open plan, with separate areas up a couple of steps. Roosters Yankee was ordered all round along with some delicious pork pies – original, black pudding and best of all topped with blue stilton. Time was slipping by, so we decided to order a taxi and head back to the Beer Festival.

With it being late afternoon on the Friday the place was very busy as expected. So armed with our glasses and programme we ventured into the never ending bar – some of the beers tried were Ainsty Assassin a 4.9% Dark Ale, Brown Cow 'Thriller in Vanilla' a 5.1% Dark Ale and Nine Standards Porter from Settle, along with Puckerball a 5% sour beer (KeyKeg) and Chain Rule (4.6% Pale) from Bad Seed and Rum Kitty a 5.5% dark ale from Brass Castle. With the festival having over 470 different UK beers of varying strengths and styles, we barely scratched the surface. It is definitely a festival worth making a trip too. From the festival we took a taxi back into the city centre area and headed to Brew York Brewery in the Fossgate. I think it fair to say we were all disappointed with the overall atmosphere of the place and the beer was also below par (maybe another time).



Day 4 and following breakfast at the Postern Gate on Piccadilly (Wetherspoons) we took a leisurely stroll up Piccadilly towards the city centre. We came across a brewery that was not on our list of possible locations – it was the Cuckoo Brewery, believed to be the only container Decoction Brewhouse in the World. It is located within a shipping container box park (20 small retail outlets) which opened back in May this year. It was not open at the time, however we managed to grab a few beers in one of the small outlets serving Bad Seed Beers (KeyKeg). Continuing up Piccadilly, we headed towards the Shambles, stopping off at the Old Shambles Tavern, a small café and gift shop which sells an increasing range of beers. A small seating area to the rear overlooks the market. Kismet a 4.7% Pale Ale from the Half Moon Brewery was in good condition. Taking note of the time and that Steve had to catch a train back to Perth we headed to the York Tap. A converted former Victorian tea rooms on York station which opened as a pub in 2010 with up to 18 cask beers, we had time for a couple of pints before Steve had to get the train. A couple of the beers that stood out were Lord Marples a 4% Bitter from Thornbridge Brewery, and Ginger Marmalade from

Brass Castle (4.7% Pale Ale). Having said goodbye to Steve we ventured back into the City and the Maltings for more of the Thornbridge 'St Louis' before heading for an excellent evening meal, at Kapadokya, a Turkish Restaurant on George Hudson Street. A freshen up and short rest, and then it was back out to the Phoenix Inn.

Day 5 the last full day of the tour was a leisurely day, having a long lie in before heading out at around noon – first port of call was the Sea Horse Hotel and a Sam Smiths OBB, before popping into the Phoenix Inn for a couple of pints and plan the rest of the day. We decide to head to the Mason Arms for their Sunday Roast, which was excellent and washed down with a couple of pints of Classic Blonde from Westgate Brewery. From here we headed over the Skeldergate Bridge and along Skeldergate to the Cock and Bottle (quickly bypassing a Health and Fitness Club!). A large, single-roomed pub near the River Ouse with traditional stone floor and wooden beams, with two ales available – Sharps Doom Bar and Black Sheep Bitter, so it was Black Sheep all round.

With the aid of a mobile phone and google maps we realised we were not far from the Golden Ball (**right**). Located in the Bishophill area of York, a short walk south of the river, this now community pub (run by a cooperative) has four very different rooms – a main bar, back room, lounge and snug, with bar billiards. Half Moon Dark Masquerade and Treboom Yorkshire Sparkle went down very well so we stayed for another pint. A great pub – well worth a visit. From here we headed back towards Bishopgate and The Swan – a wonderful traditional street corner pub with well-preserved Grade II listed interior. Six ales were available, from which we chose Treboom Swan Blonde and Half Moon Dark Masquerade.



From the Swan we crossed over towards Nunnery Lane (which eventually takes you towards York Station) we passed two pubs which were packed and with Karaoke at full pelt! Before stopping at the Trafalgar Bay (Samuel Smiths) for a pint of Old Brewery Bitter and arranging for a taxi to take us to the Regency. Then back to the Phoenix Inn for another Jazz Night – which was excellent. We cut short our visit to go along to what is the current York Pub of the Year, the Rook and Gaskill for our last pint of the tour. The Rook is one of three excellent pubs within 100 yards of the city walls at Walmgate (the others being The Rose and Crown and The Waggon and Horses) a single room pub with a split-level floor, popular with students and locals alike. It has a large range of cask ales, up to eight hand pulls plus up to three real ciders. In addition, there are up to twenty craft beers on offer. Great Heck Black Jesus (Black IPA), Bad Seed Kiwi and Lucid Cream Cookie Cream Stout from the Turning Point Brew Co were the chosen beers for our last night.

All in all, we can definitely recommend York City for a visit - the pubs are generally welcoming and busy. As for the York Beer Festival, it is more than worth a visit with at least two days required to do it any justice.

Where next? Current front runner is Peterborough – taking in the 42nd Peterborough Beer Festival at the end of August!

**Frank Mills**

## Tayside Brewery News

**Blunt Chisel Brewery** is a new nanobrewery at Blairadam. On speaking to Roy Herd, the brewer, it transpires that the brewing takes place in a former wood-working studio on the north bank of the Kelty Burn; this puts the brewery firmly in Kinrossshire, despite the Kelty postal address. (Sorry Kingdom of Fife – Blunt Chisel belong to Tayside Branch!)

Beers are brewed in 100-litre batches without the use of finings, then hand-bottled unpasteurised, definitely qualifying as RAIB (real ale in bottle). A stall can be found at Kinross Farmer's Market every 4th Saturday, and bottles are on sale at Loch Leven's Larder. The choice at the September market included Jester APA and EPA, Selma IPA, Red Ale, Beech Smoked, Vice Wheat Beer and Ginger Honey Rye Beer. All of them are robust, with ABV in the range 5.1 to 6.4%; check the brewery website for latest details.

**Inveralmond Brewery** - Ossian remains the focus of the Inveralmond core range of cask conditioned ales and continues its award winning success scooping up Bronze in Best British Style Ale at the recent Scottish Beer Awards.

This next seasonal beer in the line-up is Santa's Swallie; a 4.3% rich and smooth spiced Christmas Ale, the perfect Winter warmer for the festive season.

The Seasonal cask line up for 2019 includes Daracha launching in January, our 5.2% oak matured Scotch Ruby Ale, followed by Solasta; a sessionable refreshing 3.7% Ale, a sure fire Summer hit. Plans for Autumn are still taking shape, but include Bheira making a comeback in good time for Christmas.

**Loch Leven Brewery** has completed their re-branding with a cask range now featuring Warrior Queen (3.8%), Shining Knight (4.0%); Outlaw King (5.0%) and King Slayer (5.2%). Real ales from Loch Leven can regularly be found at the Bein Inn and Balgedie Toll.

The Loch Leven Tap room has been open for a full year, and now supplies cask-conditioned beers in growlers to take home with you. Check opening hours online before you visit – they still close up at 8pm.

**Law Brewery** is seeking to expand brewing capacity by the end of the year by purchasing a larger brewery kit (4-5 BBL) which should help meet the demand. Two new beer styles will be available soon; All-Dayer Pale Ale (3.8% ABV) and Cherry Red Stout (4.8% ABV). The good news is that Law Brewing beers have been available in cask conditioned form around Dundee in the Copper Still, Speedwell Bar, Market Bar, and the Royal Arch (Broughty Ferry).

**MòR Brewery** - As we went to print, Jim Hughan (brewer) was planning to retire and was in the process of selling the brewery. Although no details have been confirmed as yet, it was anticipated that MòR would continue under new ownership. Hopefully, we will be able to provide an update in the next issue of Hooked on Ale. And finally...Tayside CAMRA wishes Jim all the best for the future.

(Continued on page 35)





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## **Tayside Brewery News (continued)**

**71 Brewing** in Dundee are getting right in to cask-conditioned beers, having started by supplying Mutiny on the Tay, the festival ale at Alba Real Ale Festival 2018. The two Craig's have been joined by award-winning brewer Joe, who previously set up the Kingdom brewery in Fife. New larger fermenting vessels have been acquired for increasing volumes. Ferrous Red (4.8%) is on general release in Dundee, while American Pale (4.5%) has been on sale at the Green Room and Erich Alehouse. A new milk stout is conditioning, ready for the end of October; hopefully this will be available in cask too. 71 Brewing also have a Taproom and Bottle Shop (check opening hours online).

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**Hooked on Ale welcomes updates from all Tayside breweries producing cask or bottled conditioned real ale. If your brewery has not provided an update for this issue of Hooked on Ale but you would like to do so for future issues, please contact:-**

**[newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk)**



## Good Beer Guide Belgium (8th Edition)

For a number of years, I've often thought about making a trip to Belgium to experience its world-renowned beer scene. I suspect that most real ale drinkers at some time or other have considered making the short trip across the channel and I guess a lot get around to doing it but many, like myself, just continue to dream and chat about it along with many other 'bucket list' items.

Slightly less than a third the area of Scotland but more than double the population, Belgium is 'up there' as one of the world's top brewing nations producing a diverse range of beer styles. Such is Belgium's prominence in world brewing, CAMRA published the first edition of the Good Beer Guide Belgium in 1992. Sixteen years later, in April this year, the eighth edition was published.

Written by Joe Stange and Tim Webb, this edition is the definitive and essential independent guide to the Belgian beer scene. With 365 pages, the GBG Belgium provides a comprehensive insight into the history of Belgian brewing, the beer styles, the breweries and where to drink as well as other useful information on travel, Belgian food and Belgian 'beer tourism'. The guide details over 1000 beers from more than 245 breweries and blenders. Of particular usefulness is the author's ranking system highlighting which in their opinion are world class breweries or those amongst the best in Belgium. Beers are also subject to a similar critique. If pushed for time, then the guide helps visitors to prioritise which breweries to visit and which beers to try although of course that could mean missing out on a wee gem of a new brewery (there are many) and some great beers.

800 hand-picked cafes, bars, beer shops and bistros are listed across twelve geographical areas including Brussels. Each area is introduced with a short description of any regional peculiarities or points of interest especially relating to beer styles. This is followed by a listing of breweries recommended for visiting, and then finally, details of recommended cafes, bars, etc where beer can be enjoyed. There is even a short section recommending places where Belgian beers can be sampled around the world. Included in the short UK listing are Six Degrees North in Aberdeen and the Anderson, in Fortrose on the Black Isle.

This guide is more than just a 'good read' destined for the coffee table or should I say bar table! Having spent a week in May this year with like-minded friends cycling the Altmühital beer tour route in the Franconia region of Bavaria, this book has provided me with the inspiration to visit Belgium at the earliest opportunity. The only question now is.... where did I put my bike?

***Martin Fox***

The GBG Belgium along with a wide range of CAMRA publications can be purchased by visiting

**[shop.camra.org.uk](http://shop.camra.org.uk)**

RRP: £14.99

CAMRA Member: £11.99

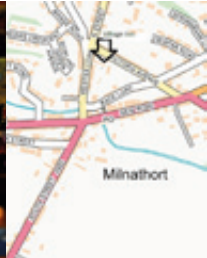
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**And finally**.....if you can't wait for CAMRA's Members Weeked, AGM and Conference in Dundee next April ...why not visit Norwich for CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival 19 - 23 February 2019?

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For more information, visit:

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