



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

The Guzzler

Published jointly by the
Glasgow & West of Scotland
Branch and the Renfrewshire
Branch of CAMRA

Vol. 6, No. 2
Summer 2016
Free

Another brewpub for Glasgow



**Shilling Brewing Co
opens in city centre –
with real ale on the menu**

**ALSO: DEBATE: IS CASK BEER TOO CHEAP? / CAMRA
REVITALISATION / PUBS / BREWERIES / HISTORY**

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Renfrewshire branch

The Renfrewshire branch of CAMRA meets on the first Wednesday of each month at pubs and venues across Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and East Renfrewshire. Meetings start at 7.30pm and after the formal meeting there is an opportunity to socialise. Please note that the Branch Meetings may move to a Monday in the autumn. Check the Renfrewshire Branch website www.renfrewshirecamra.org.uk for the latest information. Our new website at www.renfrewshire.camra.org.uk will be going live during the summer.

Wed 6 July 2016

Branch meeting
The Brown Bull, 33 Main Street, Lochwinnoch PA12 4AH, 19.30 prompt. The Brown Bull in Lochwinnoch has won the contest to be named Scotland's Pub of the Year for 2016 and is also the Renfrewshire Branch CAMRA Pub of the Year.

Wed 3 August

Branch meeting
Fox and Hounds, South Street, Houston PA6 7EN, 19.30 prompt.

Wed 7 September

Branch meeting
Cross Stobs Inn, 2 Grahamston Road, Barrhead G78 1NS, 19.30 prompt.

Branch diaries

Glasgow & wos branch

Sat 23 July **Lanarkshire Pub of the Year award presentation**

Crown Inn, 109 High Street, Biggar, 14.00. From Lanark take Stuart's 91 bus at 13.15 to arrive in time. Followed by Glasgow & wos July branch meeting.

Wed 17 August **Branch meeting**

MacGregor's Pie & Ale Howff, 5 Blackfriars Street, Glasgow, 19.00

Sat 3 September **Branch visit to Bute Brewing Co**

14.00–16.00. Meet at Glasgow Central for the 11.57 train to Wemyss Bay; connecting ferry arrives Rothesay 13.40. Followed by branch meeting in the Black Bull, Rothesay.

Tuesday 11th October **Branch meeting**

Blackfriars, 36 Bell Street, Glasgow, 19.30

Sat 22 October **Branch visit to Alechemy Brewing Co, Livingston**

Travel details and times to be confirmed. No charge but charity donations welcome.

Festivals and regional events

Thu 23 – Sat 25 June **Glasgow Real Ale Festival**

The Briggait, Glasgow. Entry £6 (£4 CAMRA members). See www.glasgowrealalefestival.co.uk for full details and beer list.

Sat 2 July

CAMRA Revitalisation Project Consultation Meeting

Caledonian Brewery, Edinburgh, 14.00–17.00

Thu 7 – Sat 9 July **Scottish Real Ale Festival**

Corn Exchange, Edinburgh. See www.sraf.camra.org.uk for details.

9–13 Aug **Great British Beer Festival**

Olympia, London
See advert for details

Fri 26 Aug

CAMRA Revitalisation Project Consultation Meeting

State Bar, Glasgow, 19.00–21.00

For the latest news visit www.glasgowcamra.org.uk
and www.renfrewshirecamra.org.uk

Or follow @GlasgowCAMRA on Twitter

Also visit Glasgow CAMRA and Renfrewshire CAMRA
on Facebook

The time for sitting on hands is over

After the election, the Scottish Government must progress with pubco reform

IT HAS become a recurring theme for the *Guzzler* that almost every issue we have the pleasant obligation to report on the news of one or more new breweries opening in our branch areas, and this time is no exception.

But it's no good having loads of great new breweries if you can't buy their beer in your local!

We have argued for some time that there are plenty of breweries in Scotland making great beer and plenty of customers who want to drink it. The success of beer festivals run by CAMRA and others and of independent free houses proves that.

The bottleneck is the pub trade, where rapacious property companies known as pubcos have come to dominate.

Publicans who are contractually tied to these companies have to buy their beer from the pubco at inflated prices, often as much as £1 a pint more than free houses pay.

The profit left for the publican is so little that it's no surprise many are unwilling to take a risk on real ale.

No wonder new brewers complain that it's hard to get their real ale into pubs.

Pub campaigners in England & Wales were gobsmacked recently when the government announced Paul Newby as the supposedly impartial pubs adjudicator, who is supposed to mediate in disputes between pub companies and their tenants. Newby comes to the post straight from a stint at a property firm which made pots of money selling off pubs to developers!

It is a sobering thought, however, that in Scotland we haven't even got as far as having a laughably unsuitable candidate for the pubs adjudicator role.

Despite the problems facing England & Wales, the reforms there are basically positive. They will introduce a "market rent option" for pubco tenants. If the existing arrangements are mutually beneficial for tenant and pubco – as the pubcos say they are – tenants can stay put. If not, they can switch to a market rent and lower beer prices.

But when the pubco reform was passed at Westminster, the Scottish Government sat on its hands, refusing to table a consent motion which would enable the legislation to take effect in Scotland too. When the matter was debated in Holyrood a full year ago, the then Business Minister Fergus Ewing accepted that progress was needed – but then effectively punted the issue into the long grass by proposing further study of the Scottish pub sector.

Since then we have heard nothing of the results of this study, and as Green co-convenor Patrick Harvie said at the time, "There isn't much left to study about this question."

The new Business Minister must act swiftly, before even more of our pubs are lost for good.

ROBBIE PICKERING
Editor

What you always wanted to know about real ale, but were afraid to ask

IF YOU'RE reading this at the third Glasgow Real Ale Festival, welcome!

We have found that a lot of people come to our beer festivals who don't usually drink real ale, or even drink beer at all.

So this is real ale

The big difference between a CAMRA festival and other beer festivals is that all the British draught beer on sale at ours is what we call real ale. You've probably heard the term but many people are not sure exactly what it means.

All beer starts off as real ale. But to get a longer shelf life, better consistency and easier handling, you can filter and pasteurise beer and stick it in a pressurised keg that just needs attached to a chilled tap. A grand technical achievement, with only one disadvantage: in our view, the beer doesn't taste as good.

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of dumbing-down of many



everyday foods. Instant coffee, fish fingers, cheese slices threatened to replace traditional foods, and beer was no exception.

A very small number of very large breweries were trying to make us all drink the same dozen or so bland, fizzy beers from one end of Britain to the other.

CAMRA began when drinkers got fed up of this and decided to fight for the proper, traditional beer they were used to.

The technical defini-

tion is beer "brewed from traditional ingredients and conditioned through secondary fermentation in the vessel from which it is served."

Real ale, simply put, is fresh, natural, unprocessed beer.

That means live yeast is still working in the beer, digesting sugars and producing carbon dioxide which gives beer that pleasant tingle. Real ale isn't fizzy, but it certainly shouldn't be flat!

We think this



method of dispense brings the best out of British-style beers.

Britain is now known across the world as the place where this way of serving beer is preserved and cherished.

Groups like CAMRA paved the way for today's "slow food" movement. It's easy to see the parallels between fresh real ale and sourdough bread or raw-milk cloth-bound cheese. We are slowly seeing the re-emergence of a food and drink culture where each region has its own bakers, its own butchers, its own brewers.

These things take more time and effort than beer squirted out

of a tin or a squishy loaf made in a factory in 25 minutes flat. But we think the extra effort is worth it.

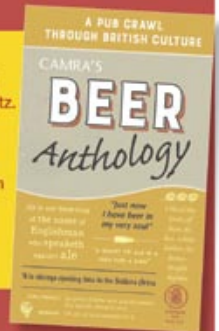
We don't think that beer appreciation should be an esoteric hobby accessible only to a wealthy elite, either. So we campaign for real ale to be affordable and accessible too, and to save traditional pubs.

"You can't have real ale without real pubs," as the great beer writer Michael Jackson said. "And there's more to a real pub than a few oak beams," he added.

If you have enjoyed the beer at G-RAF, why not make real ale your regular drink in the pub? [rp]

New for August from CAMRA Books!

An irresistible collection of quotes about beer, pubs and drinking, edited by Roger Protz. Enjoy the words of classic writers – such as William Blake, AE Housman and Thomas Hardy – together with contemporary beer commentators, including Melissa Cole and Breandán Kearney.



ISBN 9781852493332

CAMRA Member Price £7.99

(RRP £9.99)

Look for this book at

WWW.CAMRA.ORG.UK/SHOP

Lost Glasgow pub California antique

St Mungo Vintners interior rediscovered after 40 years

EXCLUSIVE

OUR OLDER readers might possibly remember a Glasgow pub called St Mungo Vintners on Queen Street.

It was the sister operation to another branch of St Mungo Vintners on Broomielaw, which continued trading just as “The Vintners” until the 1980s.

When the Queen St pub closed in 1974 the interior was stripped out and sent to the USA. At first the interior was thought to be the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, but pub preservationist Roger Guthrie has since established that it was done in a similar style by Glasgow architects McWhannel & Rogerson.

“The tile panels, woodwork, brass work and leaded glass were of a high standard as was the case in many Glasgow pubs of the period,” says Roger, who



was on the committee of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society at the time. The Society had got wind of plans for redevelopment of

the pub and hoped to get the building listed.

Before that could happen, antique dealers struck!

California lawyer

and antique dealer Mitchell Litt loved the Vintners, according to a contemporary report in the *Sunday Post*. When he heard



found in store



the pub was closing, he contacted a Glasgow antique dealer friend and asked him to buy the interior, lock, stock and barrel. The plan was to use the furnishings and fittings in a bar somewhere in California.

The Guzzler has now learned that the bar in California never opened.

Something went awry, and the items were never used. Mitchell Litt's son Kevin has found the entire pub interior has been lying untouched in their warehouse ever since it arrived in the States.

Interestingly, although we know that at the time the Vintners



closed it had not sold real ale for some time, Mitchell Litt's contemporary photos show a handsome set of stainless steel tall fonts still in place on the bar.

We are now pretty intrigued to find out whether some of the interior will perhaps find a new lease of life after all, forty years after originally purchased.

ROBBIE PICKERING

Thanks to Roger Guthrie; Photos courtesy of Kevin Litt

The beer for the bees

■ If you don't think "Motherwell", "good beer" and "positive environmental impact" belong in the same sentence, you haven't yet come across Beehive Brae Brewery.

The company, based in the old steel town, produces beers using honey from the ethically managed beehives of its parent company, Plan Bee. The products are currently brewed elsewhere to Beehive Brae's recipes. But as the company's Chris Hodge explains, there are plans to brew in-house in the near future. The brewery's parent company, Plan Bee, is committed to the betterment of bees, and reversing the trend of the last twenty years in which 50% of the bee population in Britain has disappeared. [bm]

THREE JUDGES

8 CASK ALES

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Sudden death of real ale champion

GLASGOW
GDRINKERS were in shock after the unexpected death of a popular publican.

Jason Lyons of the State Bar in Glasgow passed away on Saturday 11 June after a sudden brain haemorrhage the day before.

It was largely due to Jason that the State rose to be one of the top real ale pubs in the city, winning the local branch's Glasgow Pub of the Year award in three out of the past four years.

Jason's passion for cask beer was matched by his love of cycling and Northern Nul.

The State is particularly renowned for selling the Oakham Ales favourite Green Devil, which has its own legion of fans. "We are all absolutely devastated," said State regular Craig McVittie. "To lose such

a fantastic guy at such a young age is just awful." Paul Langley of Oakham added: "Jason was a great guy and it's such a sad loss to the whole of the community."

Glasgow & West of Scotland CAMRA chair Howard Young paid tribute on behalf of the branch, saying "Jason was a funny, generous, brilliant, decent, lovely man who loved his beer. He was always great company and went out of his way to make sure people had a great time in the pub. Because of him the State went from a very good pub to an absolutely brilliant one. Condolences to his wife, Mum Nancy and the rest of his family and friends. Jason was a gentleman of the old school. The world is a much duller and sadder place without him."



Tasting notes

On a warm and dry Saturday in May, 14 CAMRA members from across western Scotland gathered in the basement of Blackfriars in Glasgow to hone their beer tasting palates. Led by Lindsay Grant, chair of the Western Scotland Tasting Panel, the students were given a thorough course in everything to do with brewing. After smelling the ingredients (malt, hops, yeast and water – but you knew that), and discussing good and bad flavours, appearance and aroma, the serious business finally started: Tasting the beer! Split into small tables of young, older, young and heart and both male and female, the students worked their ways through three half pints of real ale. The notes were collated by Lindsay and will feed into the important beer descriptions that are featured in the *Good Beer Guide*. Serious business this tasting lark! Watch out for future tasting panels which are open to all CAMRA members in western Scotland.

JOE PAKENHAM



Jason at last year's Glasgow Real Ale Festival

The brew doctors

GLASGOW DOCTORS Owen Sheerins and James Morton, together with Richard O'Brien are the men behind the newest brewing venture in our area, Out Of Town Brewing, currently taking shape in an industrial unit somewhere in Lanarkshire (hence the name).

While studying medicine together at Glasgow University, Owen, already an accomplished homebrewer, taught James how to make beer. Once James also started winning awards, Richard brought his sales talents to the group (and they taught him to brew too).

The group claim to be perfectionists and say their beers will stand out from the crowd due to their precision and consistency, boasting that any batch which isn't up to scratch will be unceremoniously poured down the drain.

As they are still in the process of constructing their brewery, the



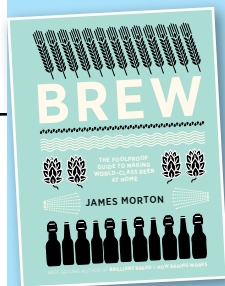
James, Owen and Richard pause for a quick beer while building their brewery (Picture courtesy Out Of Town)

planned core beers don't have names yet, but there will be a pale ale, an IPA, a porter and a California-style steam beer. There will also be specialist beers, with the trio warning "don't be surprised if when you visit us you struggle to move for the stacks of oak barrels."



DOES GBBO NOW stand for "Get a Belgian brew on"? It might well do.

As if starting a brewery and being a doctor weren't enough, James Morton has somehow also managed to find the time to write another book,



which has just been published. Does the lad ever sleep?

Departing from his previous baking themes, *Brew* is a complete guide to homebrewing written in a chatty and witty style.

■ *Brew*, Quadrille Publishing, £20

Local breweries in brief

■ Bute Brewing Co of Rothesay hit the headlines recently with owner Aidan Canavan claiming the brewery may have to close. The cause was the council backing out of the lease of a building to allow the brewery to expand from its current tiny premises. We understand that negotiations with the council are now proceeding in a constructive direction once again.

The brewery is currently selling all

the beer it can make on the island, the majority in bottle. The much-needed expansion will enable them to add more capacity and package more beer in-house. Glasgow and West of Scotland branch are planning a visit to the brewery on 3rd September: see the branch's Facebook page for details.

■ Two new local beer producers have announced themselves: Gallus Brewing (brewing on the

Drygate studio kit) and Yer Maw. As you might have guessed from the names, both are based in Glasgow. We have no information on the beers to be produced yet or where they will be available.

■ José Luis Bravo has left Arran Brewery to become new head brewer at the Clockwork in Glasgow, replacing Declan McCaffrey who is moving on to join the new Shilling Brewing Co (see p 12).

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A poor start

The Campaign for Real Ale is currently consulting its members to ask them who and what CAMRA should represent in the future.

One of CAMRA's four founders, Michael Hardman, has returned to lead the Revitalisation Project – a whole-sale review into the purpose and strategy of the campaign.

Members are invited to attend consultation meetings across the UK this summer.

But the project has got off to a poor start, says *Jonathan Kemp* in the first of a series of opinion pieces. We will be printing as many opinions from members and *Guzzler* readers as we can, so if you have a view on what CAMRA should or shouldn't be doing, please drop us a line!

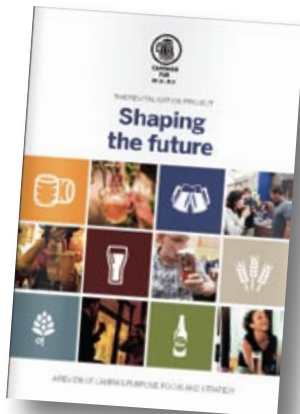
I COULDN'T BELIEVE my ears when I turned on the news on Thursday, 31 March. Apparently, CAMRA had served its purpose! Once I realised that it was not April Fool's Day for another day, I started paying attention to what was being said.

The Project has not started well. All the headlines, all the coverage, was due to what I consider to be an inept press release. It sometimes seems that CAMRA HQ are going out of their way to alienate and discourage the active members – one bad headline can undo years of local campaigning. Hopefully, lessons will be learned from this.

Headlines apart, what is the Revitalisation Project? Put simply, it is an attempt by CAMRA to ensure it remains relevant in an ever changing beer world. As many people have said, when CAMRA was established 45 years ago, there was a clear distinction between Real Ale (good) and keg beer (bad). It was easy to tell the difference between the two products. Unfortunately, in some ways, CAMRA has become a victim of its own success. Having succeeded in changing the entire British brewing scene, and having succeeded in encouraging more and more small brewers to develop a wide range of differing beer styles, a number of these brewers have proceeded to produce beers that do not meet the definition of Real Ale, but that a

number of drinkers enjoy. Although I will always seek a Real Ale, I must concede that not all of these new keg beers can automatically be written off as being bad! I am not going to get into the "craft"/cask debate here – largely because "craft" is a meaningless term that does nothing to describe whether beer is dispensed from a keg or a cask.

For what it is worth, my opinion is that CAMRA should continue to campaign as it is now – it would be dangerous to lose sight of the risk that Real Ale still faces. Whatever the position south of the border, the battle for Real Ale has certainly not been won in Scotland. Not enough pubs sell quality Real Ale. It is up to all CAMRA members to improve this situation. There are clear battle lines just now. Changing the goals would only lead to confusion. Furthermore, just because CAMRA does not actively campaign for the modern style of keg beer, this does not mean that CAMRA is against it. Of course, others will have different views. What is important is that these views are aired and debated openly and without rancour. Feel free to write to the *Guzzler* with your views. Contribute to the debate on social media. Perhaps even discuss it in the pub. Whatever you do, whether a CAMRA member or not, please take part in the consultation. The future of CAMRA is in your hands!



Find out more:
revitalisation.camra.org.uk

Consultation Meeting

State Bar, Glasgow, Friday 26 August 19.00–21.00

Another new brewery opens in Glasgow

GLASGOW ADDED another brewpub to its list in June with the opening of Shilling Brewing Co in West Regent St.

Unlike certain other hostleries in the city calling themselves “brewing co”, Shilling will definitely brew on the premises – although at opening, the equipment was not quite ready yet and the bar was selling beer made at Drygate.

Head brewer Declan McCaffrey joins the team from the Clockwork, bringing with him his trademark nettle beer. Other core beers will include an IPA, a blonde beer and a red ale.

The copper-clad brewery is right behind the bar. From there the beer is pumped into fermentation tanks in the basement of the building, and when it is ready, back up to the serving tanks mounted high above the bar.

All the beer are unfiltered and unpasteurised, but most are dispensed by gas. Happily, Shilling is also going the extra distance by producing and serving some cask-conditioned real ale. [rp]



SHILLING
BREWING Co.



DO WE HAVE TO PAY

SINCE TIME immemorial, drinkers have complained that beer is too dear. Brewers and publicans, of course, think beer is too cheap!

First and foremost, CAMRA is a consumer organisation and so we quite rightly keep a close eye on the price of a pint. But of course, we

don't want our favourite pubs and breweries to go out of business either – that would be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

We have asked a small brewer and a publican to give their views: Do we need to allow beer to get dearer so that we keep the variety and quality we've become used to?

THE BREWER
Jake Griffin, Up Front Brewing

“If I just wanted to make money, I'd only sell keg beer”

LIKE MANY, I love the soft, subtle nuances of a well conditioned pint of cask beer.

Having started my career as a brewer at one of the greatest cask breweries in Scotland, Fyne Ales, I was thrown into the world of cask head first, and pretty soon I was hooked. I liked the way the slightly warmer temperature and lower levels of carbonation seemed to give some beers greater depth, richer mouthfeel and often seemed to release the aromatics more.

At the time I frequented The Three Judges where expert cellarman Ronnie Anderson was pulling

some of the best conditioned cask ales I have ever tried. I knew then that when I opened my own brewery I would definitely be putting my beers into casks.

But when the time came to sell my beers the reality hit me in the face, and surprisingly enough, it's all about cost: A lot of new brewers want to make more flavoursome, frequently higher ABV, and therefore expensive beers. Nobody wants a pint of 10% double IPA or Russian Imperial Stout, and not enough people want them to sell a 9 gallon cask in a week! Kegged beers can stay on the bar for longer and as such have become the

dispense method of choice. We also see the use of smaller kegs, and smaller glasses, down from the classic pint to schooners and even third of a pint measures.

Most cask bars, on the other hand, still require the beer to be sold at between £3–5 per pint. This of course determines how much they can pay the brewer for a cask. Selling such beers at the prices dictated by the cask market has one result: restricted commercial viability.

I have to sell 41L (9 gallon) casks for around 2/3rds the price of my 30L kegs. If I were to only sell casks then my brewery would not be commercially viable. Basically I want to see my beers sold on cask so much that I use the revenues from keg sales to subsidise the cask.

So what's the solution? I believe that the key to a cask ale resurgence is going to come through the wider adoption of pils (4.5 gallon casks, i.e. half the usual size), sold at

a commercially viable price, one which is dictated by the brewers and priced accordingly on the bar. I believe that people are just as prepared to pay the same for cask as they do for kegged ales, but the structure of the cask market is such that brewers have to brew to meet a certain price point. A lot of drinkers are unfortunately driven away from cask beer in general by the result! If publicans continue to demand cask beers at prices dictated by the customers, the customers are only going to get a certain kind of cask beer, and whilst as brewers we can all produce this, it's not a prospect that many relish. I don't want cask beer to be restricted to just 4.5% pale ales and stouts, produced by breweries big enough to work the tiny margins.

If we want to see the new generation of start up brewers putting their beer into cask, we will have to expect to see that reflected in the price on the bar. ■

MORE FOR CASK ALE?

THE PUBLICAN

The Guzzler spoke to a publican who wishes to stay anonymous

“I couldn’t put a cask on at £7 a pint”

WE HAVE always tried to keep the price on the bar reasonable, and cask beer prices in my pub have not risen as much as keg.

We do have a price point, maybe something to do with the area. I’m always quite conscious of our prices. For the last couple of years I’ve tried to hold prices as much as I can. There is a bit of room to have an price rise, it depends on the customers. Some people don’t seem to mind what they pay, others definitely do.

The bargain-based prices model favoured by a certain pub chain isn’t good for beer, when brewers can’t make any money on the casks they sell.

Fundamentally, though, we also have a price point that determines what we can pay for a cask. Like anyone running a business, I

have price pressures and a gross profit that I want to achieve.

I just couldn’t put a cask on at £7 a pint – I don’t believe punters would pay it.

Sometimes we have to ask brewers for a keener price, but the brewer has to be happy too. We care about relationships with suppliers; in the long term that’s important.

Buying in beer always involves a bit of juggling so that you can pay the brewer a good price but also offer the customer a price that looks reasonable.

I don’t think cask ale would necessarily be served by higher prices either. Occasionally, it’s the cause of an epiphany, when someone tastes a real ale and realises that it’s not just more flavourful than what they were drinking before,

it’s also cheaper.

I can perfectly understand if brewers want to make keg beer which is more lucrative – good on them. I wouldn’t like it if they stopped making cask, though.

It must be frustrating for a brewer to see his beer, that he’s put his heart and soul into, on sale in some places for two quid a pint, when commodity lager is going for £4.50.

Weak beer isn’t always cheaper – some very weak beers are loaded with hops, so are expensive to buy in. Good brewers spend money on good ingredients, so you can totally see where the money’s going.

If I have to ask a brewer for a lower price I have to give them some volume in return. I want to keep the brewer happy.

Sometimes the numbers just don’t

add up. I have bottles in the fridge that I don’t make any money on – but they are still expensive! They are basically a loss leader.

Price doesn’t always mean quality. Some expensive beer is rubbish and some inexpensive beer is really good.

There is stuff I could buy in, but by the time I mark it up, it’s too dear for my customers. It’s always a balancing act. I know what I can spend to end up with a beer that I can sell.

I could buy a cheap cask, put it on on a Saturday night and it would get drunk and push up my gross profit a bit.

At the same time, I have brewers calling up offering me a cask for £50. I don’t buy those either. I want to maintain a certain standard of quality in the ales I sell. ■

THE DRINKER

That’s you!

IF YOU’VE read this far, you probably already have an opinion of your own.

Are you prepared to pay more for a pint of something special – or do you think drinkers are being ripped off already? Let us know – write to theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk

Around Glasgow and West

■ We very much appreciate updates from readers about pub openings and closures, and information about pubs that have started (or stopped) selling real ale. Send your gen to theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk, or tweet it to [@GlasgowCAMRA](https://twitter.com/GlasgowCAMRA).

The **COACH HOUSE**, Cardross has stopped selling real ale.

The **Grumpy Goat** in Yorkhill (formerly Stirling Castle) is now **ELENA'S SPANISH BAR & RESTAURANTE** and no longer claims to serve real ale.

A new beer shop, the **PROPER BEER CO** is planned to open in Glasgow's East End.

As we noted in the last issue, **MACSORLEY'S** in Jamaica St is closed. We had asked owner **Punch Taverns** to comment, which they did but not until the **Guzzler** had gone to print. The statement said "We are working hard to recruit a new **Business Partner** to take the long term opportunity and hope to be back open and trading in two to three weeks." That was on 8 April. If the pub re-opens within the life of the current issue, we will be delighted, but surprised.

The **KILORAN BAR** at Eglinton Toll, closed for some years, has been demolished.

The basement of the **Lorne Hotel**,

Kelvingrove, is to open as **THE KELVIN**. No real ale.

The **SPIRITUALIST** has opened on Miller St. No real ale.

The **PORT INN** is selling Bute Brewing Co beers (see news item on page 9).

Crack barman Ross McLelland is moving on from **Blackfriars** to take charge of **HIPPO TAPROOM**, the new **Sauchiehall St** bar from the owners of the **Hippo Beers** shop. There will be three rotating real ales and the operators are hoping to add more if they can sell enough of it. You know what to do.

The **INVER** in Otter Ferry is selling real ale.

Emergency services had to attend on 12 June when part of the frontage of **THE GRANARY** on Kilmarnock Road collapsed onto the pavement. There were no injuries.

The **OLD PLANE TREE** in Darnley has re-opened as a **Marston's** house.



It's ScotVale!

REGULARS WERE quite bemused, if not moist of eye, when popular watering hole **The Vale** in Dundas St. suddenly pulled down the shutters, at very short notice, on the last Saturday in April.

Tweeting that day that it would eventually return in four years' time, it should be explained to strangers that the place is not some **Bacchanalian Brig a Doon**.

Instead, the answer is quite simple, if somewhat frustrating, to us ale drinkers.

ScotRail will be leasing the place, as a ticket office, while **Queen St** station is being rebuilt. The process, yet to begin, is programmed to conclude in 2020. ScotRail are taking over the entire building.

A shame, as the place was beginning to impress with a constantly rotating catalogue of ales always maintained under the watchful eye and palate of **Ally Craig**, in charge of the cellar.

Meanwhile **William Smith**, one of the owners, advises that while one door closes another one opens. The **Howwood Inn** near **Johnstone**, which they also own, is to reopen shortly following a two and a half year rebuild.

It will now be called **The Boarding House** and will have three taps "focusing mainly, but not exclusively, on Scottish Beers."

TOM DAVIDSON

A Campaign of Two Halves



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01/15

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Local Trading Standards Offices

If you have a complaint about quality or service in a pub, always try to sort your complaint out with the pub first. If that doesn't help, you can contact your local Trading Standards offices. It is CAMRA policy to print these contact details in branch magazines.

Glasgow & WOS area:

East Dunbartonshire

0141 578 8813
trading_standards
@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

West Dunbartonshire

01389 738552
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Glasgow

0141 287 6681
ts.enquiries@glasgow.gov.uk

North Lanarkshire

01236 638678
(Coatbridge)
01236 638905
(Cumbernauld)
01698 274220
(Motherwell)

South Lanarkshire

08457 406080
Business.Enquiries
@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Renfrewshire Branch area:

Renfrewshire Council

Tel: 0300 300 0380
Citizens Advice Consumer Service 03454 040506.
Email: ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk

East Renfrewshire Council

tradingstandards@east-renfrewshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0141 577 3782

Inverclyde Council

Tel: 01475 714200
Email: customerservice@inverclyde.gov.uk

Plus ça change

DUNCAN MACKAY'S article in a recent Guzzler, describing the Glasgow pubs included in the 1981 Good Beer Guide, led me to hunt out "The Glasgow Pub Guide", written by Bill McLean and others in 1983.

It's fascinating to see how the pub scene in Glasgow has changed in the years since its publication. (However, just to show that some things don't change, the guide editor acknowledges the assistance of Alistair Boyd in compiling the work.) According to the guide, there were 720 pubs in the city at the time and 67 are described here as well as 20 restaurants. Many of the pubs listed have disappeared or been renamed, including some which proved to be short-lived attempts at up-market theme bars, like Black Jack's or Carnegie's. There

are sad losses like the Mitre, the Dunrobin and the Bay Horse as well as old survivors like the Saracen Head and Brechin's Bar. The Guide covers some of the early real-ale havens, including the Bon Accord, the Doublet and the Greek Taverna. Tennents doesn't figure and Byres Road is described as "a great disappointment from the pub point of view... lager and keg beer rule, so polite service and well poured pints are rare commodities."

The pubs selling cask ale then also included the Arlington, which had Maclay's 70/- from McGlashan fonts, and the Press Bar and the Smiddy which both had Heriot's 80/-. And theatre goers were a more discerning lot in those days; you could get Maclay's 80/- at the Tron and Strathalbyn Heavy at the Mitchell Theatre.

We also learn that there was a regular in the Aragon who had once starred in a four-minute film version of Barnaby Rudge "which he has never seen to this day", that among the curios hanging in

the Mally Arms was a "stuffed crocodile with a broken jaw" and that two of the three stuffed pigeons in the Three Pigeons, Sauchiehall Street had mysteriously gone missing.

Since there's a chance you might be reading this at the Briggait, I must mention the entry for the Victoria Bar, just round the corner. Bill described this "paragon among Glasgow's public houses" as "one of Glasgow's cherished cultural assets". And there's more! After describing the range of beers – Maclays 60/-, 70/- and 80/-, Strathalbyn Heavy and Theakston's Best Bitter on hand pump and McGlashan font – and the selection of Cadenhead's range of older malt whiskies, he goes on to the entertainment. There was folk music at the weekends and annual celebrations of Robert Burns and William Topaz McGonagale "with much piping of the haggis for the former and banjoing of the stovies for the latter". Now that was a pub!

BRIAN MCATEER

Pub discounts

Members of CAMRA benefit from discounts in a number of pubs. Check the list at glasgowcamra.org.uk/discounts for details.



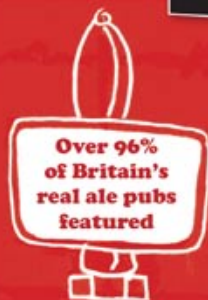
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