

Halt! say regulars

Outrage as pubco plans to 'gentrify' Halt Bar

LOCALS ARE up in arms after plans emerged for a radical overhaul of Woodlands bar The Halt.

Regulars fear the proposal by owner Punch Taverns will destroy the pub's character.

Campaigners have set up a "Save the Halt Bar" Facebook group to save their pub: www.facebook.com/groups/483408108339825/

Punch intends to spend up to a quarter of a million pounds refurbishing the bar to relaunch it as a "mid-market" venue with a "strong food offering".

The pub is "not viable in its current form," Punch wrote to campaigners.

Layout plans clearly show the removal of the existing island bar and its replacement by an open-plan eating area.

This would ruin the Halt, turning it into yet another any-dyne bar, say campaigners.

Local MSP Sandra White (SNP) is attempting to facilitate dialogue between campaigners and the pubco, and there is a petition being circulated around the West End which over 300 people have already signed.

CAMRA calls on drinkers to help scrap duty escalator

EVEN THOUGH more and more of us are watching the pennies, and many pubs are struggling to survive, this year's Budget continued the policy of the "duty escalator".

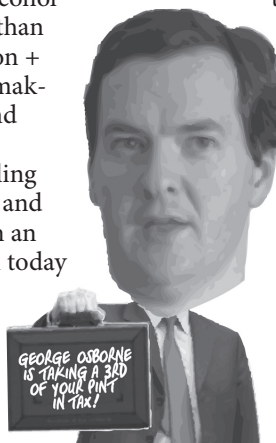
This means alcohol duty rises faster than inflation (inflation + 2%) every year, making beer more and more expensive.

CAMRA is calling all beer drinkers and pub goers to sign an online e-petition today by visiting www.camra.org.uk/saveyourpint. We need 100,000 signatures to trigger

a high profile Parliamentary debate and put pressure on the Government ahead of Budget 2013.

The petition has already reached 85,000 signatures, so the chances of reaching the magic 100,000 are good.

But to get the next 15,000 we still need as many people as possible. So please sign the petition and then spread the word. With around £1 on every pint going to the Treasury in beer duty and VAT, it's time to save your pint and call time on the beer duty escalator!



editorial.....

A Punch in the face to heritage pub

WHETHER WE like it or not, radical change is coming to more and more of the city's most traditional pubs. The old Mackintosh's Bar is now Jackson's; the Carnarvon is boarded up; the Victoria Bar, Bridgegate has re-opened as a bistro.

All operators of licensed premises are trying to survive in tough times, but it's clear that no-one, especially not the big pubcos, has a magic formula for sure-fire success.

CAMRA's Heritage Pubs group says of the Halt that the large Edwardian U-shaped bar, old half-pannelled walls and separate snug are of significant interest. If Punch rip these fixtures out, they are gone forever; you can't change your mind in a couple of years' time. CAMRA is not opposed to pub refurbishments in principle but we believe the particular refitting currently being proposed by Punch

would destroy the unique character of the Halt Bar.

The pubs we see successfully bucking the trend of declining trade are those like the Free Trade in Newcastle and the Southampton Arms in London, which retain the existing character of their building and concentrate on selling the finest beer and food they can get.

Punch themselves have only recently entered into a free-of-tie lease of just this type with Thornbridge brewery on a pub in Sheffield.

Thousands of pubs would love to have what the Halt has going for it – an original early 20th century interior, an iconic place in the city's music history and dedicated regulars who like it just the way it is.

Punch must work with the Save the Halt campaigners, not against them, to secure the pub's future.

branch diary.....

7-14 September
Glasgow Beer Week
See glasgowbeerweek.com for details

Saturday 8 September
Branch Meeting
2pm, Fyne Ales Brewery Tap, Cairndow. There is a bus laid on, leaving from the Bon Accord at 12.00. The cost will be around £15 each. Contact Stan Thompson if you're interested.

Saturday 15 September
South Side Crawl
2pm, see internet for starting point

Saturday 22 September
Cove & Kilcreggan Beer Festival
Cove Burgh Hall. The Branch will be having a social.

Tuesday 9 October
Branch Meeting
7.30pm, Curlers Rest, 256-260 Byres Road, Glasgow

11-13 October
Ayrshire Beer Festival
Troon Concert Hall

Saturday 27 October
Airdrie and Coatbridge Social
2pm start at the Robert Hamilton.

9-10 November
21st Alloa Octoberfest
Alloa Town Hall

Wednesday 14 November
Branch Meeting
7.30pm, Counting House, George Square, Glasgow

Check glasgowcamra.org.uk for up-to-date information

■ Join our Facebook page facebook.com/GlasgowCAMRA, or follow @GlasgowCAMRA and @GlasgowGuzzler on Twitter

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Crawling down the tweet

The branch's Young Members group relaunched itself recently with a well-attended pub crawl along Byres Road. *Tim Davies reports:*

TODAY, THE technology of the 21st Century caught up with simple, age-old traditions of drinking beer and the mix was a great success.

This was the first Twitter led crawl I had followed—in the good old days you could spend an evening trying to catch the cohort up but now you can be tracked every inch of the way.

All good crawls have a starting point and we selected a downhill course from the Oran Mor which was busy and provided a grand start to the day, so let Twitter take over:

If you're out on the #byresroadcrawl today you can spot me by my green jumper. I've a @CAMRA_Official badge too, need a few pints first tho.

Crowd beginning to grow! 6 of us here now on the #byresroadcrawl

Actually we were 8 by the time we left but who was counting. A complete change of scene from the ecclesiastical to the traditional (from the exterior) Curlers Rest.

The #byresroadcrawl is now in @Curlers_Rest with its most influential member, @patrickharvie #glasgowbeer

Patrick is our local Green MSP and a staunch supporter of the campaign and its aims. Curlers Rest not content with providing a fine range of ale then delivered some snacks which if you are a follower you will already know about.

VIP service at the @Curlers_Rest hope the @ubiquitouschip is ready for us! #byresroadcrawlhttp://twitpic.com/9x2uzd

Reinforcements were arriv-

ing by the minute, the cohort expanding to a legion, a strong contingent of young members with mobiles stuck to their palms! Next stop the Chip. A landmark in Ashton Lane, a fine restaurant with a bar squeezed in.

#byresroadcrawl now at @ubiquitouschip on the roof terrace. Cosy and warm despite the rain. Haggis pies up next!

I didn't even know there was a roof terrace but this was the ideal location as more foot soldiers had appeared. I forged ahead to Tennent's, the prime example of a perpendicular drinking establishment, heaving inside, a dozen ales available.

Currently in Tennent's bar over 20 people in the crawl!

Curiously the next Tweet was the last:

The #byresroadcrawl is done. Thanks to everyone who came out. Epic day. Get joined up to CAMRA! Special thanks to bars with food :)

This wasn't really the end of the crawl but we all know it's best not to Tweet if you are under the influence. A breakaway group pulled into the Aragon, whilst the pathfinder headed for Bruadar, the newest offering pub on Byres Road, I had a fine pint of Durham Magus which set me up for my last port of call, the Three Judges, which as always had beers I had not sampled before.

I had had my fill, Twitter had gone off tweet but this had been a fine crawl, 7 unique pubs, many more unique beers, no sun, plenty of rain and all digitally followed with modern technology. Looking forward to the next cyber-crawl.

Fyne time

LOVERS OF pale 'n' hoppy beers got a treat over the jubilee weekend as Fyne Ales welcomed them to their third annual festival at the brewery.

In addition to the regular Fyne range, several specials were on offer such as black and blonde Davaar, red and blonde Lismore, session-strength Rune and strong Superior IPA.

Jarl, a 3.8% bitter ale with Citra hops is now Fyne's most popular beer, with head brewer Wil Wood under strict instructions to make sure it doesn't run out! This will be easier in the future once the planned new 40-barrel brewery is constructed, quadrupling the company's capacity.

The old brewery shop has been replaced by a swish new tap where visitors can enjoy the beers on draught as well as being able to buy bottles to take away.

The third pair of IPA Project beers, Sanda, is due to be launched at the Three Judges in mid-September.

Another new beer is the strong stout Zombier, brewed with homebrewers Chris Lewis and Jake Griffin to their own recipe.

Krackers from Kelburn

■ Kelburn launched a new 4.5% beer, Jaguar, at the Pot Still in June. It's been proving very popular with punters. The brewery already won recognition back in spring when the branch voted its Cart Noir porter Beer of the Year 2011.

■ New brewery from the Borders, Tempest, nearly caused an upset at the Beer of the Year vote, coming second behind Kelburn. This would be an impressive showing by

any new brewery, but was even more so given the fact that at the time, only one of their beers had ever been seen on sale in a Glasgow pub!

■ There must be something in the lager! We hear that German-inspired Glasgow brewery WEST have lost their Scots-born head brewer – he's found love with a German lass and decamped to the Fatherland. It's all change with a new brewing team, as second brewer Felix is also going back to beer school to gain a stringent German brewing qualification. And a new 4% draught lager called simply WEST has been launched to complement the popular 4.9% St Mungo.

■ Loch Lomond brewery launched less than a year ago (we reported) and is steadily gaining accounts with the latest special being the house beer for the new Wetherspoon outlet in Helensburgh, the Henry Bell.

There was more celebration in August when the brewery's Kessog ale was voted top beer at the Helensburgh Round Table beer festival.

News? Let us know: theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk

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:

East Dunbartonshire
0141 578 8813
trading.standards
@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

West Dunbartonshire
01389 738552
trading.standards
@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

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



Glasgow
BEER WEEK
7–14 September 2012
glasgowbeerweek.com

- Belgian speciality beer bar **BREL** in Ashton Lane is revising its beer list and has introduced a hand-pump for the first time.
- The **HENRY BELL**, the latest addition to the Wetherspoons chain is now open in James Street, Helensburgh. The pub has a Rennie Mackintosh inspired interior, an exposed roof structure and a garden.
- **1901** has reopened as a tapas bar! Our reporter says that on opening night the food and the beer were good.
- **RUSTLERS**, Station Road, Tarbet is on the ground floor of the Clan MacFarlane Heritage Centre and is reported to have good quality food and two Fyne handpumps.
- The **Liquid Ship** in Great Western Road has changed hands and is now called **ROXY 171**. No update on beer.
- The **POURHOUSE** (formerly **Gazelle**) in Finnieston has opened with three handpumps.
- **THE DOWANHILL** in Partick closed briefly, but is reported to be open again. Also in danger is the

Awards to top pubs

THE STATE BAR was voted the branch's Glasgow Pub of the Year at a meeting in August. Top pub in Argyll is Tigh an Truish, Clachan Seil. In Dunbartonshire the Commodore Hotel, Helensburgh was winner and Lanarkshire's finest this year was thought to be the Clydesdale, Lanark. More details next issue.

- **ELEPHANT & BUGLE** in Maryhill, seen displaying a For Lease sign.
- **THE CARNARVON**, St George's Cross, has closed and is boarded up.
- In Motherwell, the **DALZIEL ARMS** has been for sale for some time.
- **Milngavie's CROSS KEYS** is closed, apparently for refurbishment.
- At Partick Cross **BRUADAR** has closed after just nine months.
- **THE VICTORIA**, Bridgegate, has been refurbished, and is now a bistro.
- In Luss, the **LOCH LOMOND ARMS** has opened after a three-year refurbishment selling ale from Belhaven and Loch Lomond.

■ At Kelvinbridge, **INN DEEP** was due to open in early September as we went to press. Run by scions of the Williams Bros family, it will offer cask beer, foreign beers and house beer from the Williams keg range.

Thanks to Tim Davies, Phillip Emond, Nick Simmonds and Russ Sweeney for pub gen.

Willie Ross

Glasgow and West of Scotland CAMRA would like to raise a glass in memory of long-time branch member Willie Ross who died suddenly in May. He will be missed.

Here's to your health by Stephen McGowan

OFTEN I wonder how many drinkers are truly aware of the on-going struggle over the nation's relationship with alcohol. Will readers of the *Guzzler* appreciate that laws surrounding the sale of alcohol are more draconian than the temperance legislation of the early 20th century?

I would expect you to at least be familiar with minimum pricing, especially since Nicola Sturgeon finally announced that the minimum price would be 50p. It is unlikely that the humble pint will be affected. A typical pint is about 2 or 3 units, meaning the minimum price would be £1.50 per pint. If you know a boozier selling at that price, I'd like to know about it. Perhaps some of the stronger ales may be affected, but again I think this unlikely – a pint of 9% strength ale is about five units, meaning it will cost you at least £2.50 under minimum pricing. But although your favourite pint (at the moment, for me this is Fyne Ales' Jarl) may be unaffected, be wary – it is not just minimum pricing which is driving the alcohol agenda. The health lobby have had tremendous success in lobbying Holyrood and a lot of the recent licensing laws have come about because of measures they have advanced.

Underpinning the licensing law in Scotland are five objectives. One of these is "protecting and improving public health". The wording has always been controversial. It is rather odd that the licensed seller of alcohol should have a legal duty to protect and improve public health through the sale of alcohol which is, after all, a dangerous drug when consumed irresponsibly.

When this objective was first announced it made headlines, with the *Evening Times* headlining "The Death of the Pie and Pint!" and rumbles about pubs being forced to sell salads (real salads, not "Glasgow salads"). The reality has been that most licensing boards simply don't know what to do with the public health objective, far less the licensed trade. But now things have cranked up as the NHS have been given a statutory role in the Scottish licensing process,

alongside the likes of the police, and now appear at licensing boards and submit objections across Scotland. They famously tried to do so in Glasgow last year, and failed spectacularly, for example in objecting to a supermarket's licence variation which actually sought to reduce the amount of alcohol on display. But they are learning! In Edinburgh recently a Sainsbury's application was refused after an objection from the NHS that there were too many licences in the area.

One of the main difficulties is in using general alcohol health-harm statistics as a way of preventing licences. It is very difficult for a licensing board to simply say that "alcohol is bad", therefore a new restaurant or hotel should not be permitted to open. There is in fact case-law on this point. In a case from the Western Isles the Sheriff held that for a licensing board to be able to properly deal with health-harm statistics those stats would have to be tied to the specific premises and the specific application. In other words, general bleating about the state of the nation's relationship with alcohol will just not cut it. But that has been ignored in some hearings, including the case of Sainsbury's in Edinburgh.

But the NHS is here to stay in Scottish licensing, and we must all get used to it. There are further efforts being made elsewhere to have us drink less and less. The "recommended units" are about to be revised. Do we think they will go up or down? Some might argue that all this is a paternalistic, nanny state approach to dealing with alcohol health harms, but those arguments are falling on deaf ears. I said at the beginning that the law is now more restrictive than under old temperance laws and that is certainly so; but those old laws were swept away in the end because the temperance league splintered – but also because the public were fed up with being treated as infants. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. I'm off to find a Jarl.

■ Stephen McGowan, of Lindsays, is a leading licensing solicitor and author of "Licensing and Gambling Law in Scotland". stephenmcgowan@lindsays.co.uk – @LicensingLaws

THE NEW GLASGOW GUZZLER



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

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drinking all over the world

Gent-ly does it

WHEN PLANNING a trip to the Frühlingsfest in Munich, it seemed a good idea to allow for a visit to Gent on the way home.

Drinking in Belgium, after all, is a very different experience!

As a result, we recently found ourselves having to fill a Friday. Arranging a sensible, early afternoon meeting time, I managed to find Planck (not too difficult – it is a barge moored on the canal at Ter Platen). First order of the day – navigating the extensive beer menu. This is my problem with drinking in Belgium – it is almost impossible to ensure you will have the best beers available when there is a choice of 200 or so in a bar. I'll keep trying though...

The first beer of the day was Hopus – a blond, hoppy beer which, when served from a bottle, comes with 2 glasses (one for the beer, and a small

shot glass for the sediment). This was quickly followed with a Kwak (on draught), while Stan started with a bottle of Bon Secours.

It would have been easy to stay at Planck, but we decided that we should at least attempt to visit some other places, so we walked the 20 metres or so to Brouwzaele (Ter Platen). There, obviously still in nautical mode, I had a bottle of Piraat (a mere 10.5% – the strength of beers can also be a bit of a challenge, only alleviated slightly by the 330ml measures). Next, we were both tempted by one of the special beers namely Carolus Hopsinjoor. This is a beautiful, strong five-hopped beer, hard to resist.

I braved the Gent busses to head to Trappisthuis (Brabantdam), an establishment that had never been visited by either of us. Stan, as usual, opted to walk. The bus was (just) quicker, and we met up

again just before the pub. Once again, there was an extensive beer menu. I know that I had Westmalle Tripel and Boelens Tripel Klok there – both very drinkable examples of the style. Stan tried another Trappist beer, Rochefort 6, and then noticed they had a beer brewed on the premises, the Johannes Blond 'Gentsch Stadsbier'. Naturally this had to be tried and very good it was too.

Having carefully considered the rather excellent *Good Beer Guide to Belgium*, our next planned halt was Deus (Vlaanderenstraat). Unfortunately, it appears that this particular pub/restaurant has decided to concentrate on food – the available menu suggested that there were only a few, more commercial, beers available, so we headed straight to the Trollekelder instead.

Braving the public transport system again proved to be a bit of a mistake. Rather than taking the time to find out that more than one bus ran from the South bus station to just outside the Trollekelder (Bij Sint-Jacobs), I jumped on the

first tram that came. Although the route took me close to the pub, there were no stops close. By the time I arrived, Stan was already part way through his first beer a St Bernardus Prior 8 from Watou. To catch up, I opted for the Chouffe Houblon (described as "Dobbelen IPA Tripel") – a superb, intensely hoppy beer that I find hard to avoid. This was quickly followed by Delerium Tremens.

Spying a *fritterie*, Stan insisted on a food halt before we went to our final destination, the Waterhuis (Groentemarkt). If you only have time to visit one Gent pub, I would suggest that this is the one to go to. Somewhat unusually, this pub has a magnificent range of beers on draught. By now, feeling the need to reprise some of my favourites from the day, I had some Piraat while Stan had the house beer Gandavum. Both of us followed this (unsurprisingly) by more Chouffe Houblon. By now, it was getting a bit late. At least the day had not been wasted!

JONATHAN KEMP