



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

The New Glasgow **Guzzler**

Glasgow & West of Scotland branch of CAMRA
Vol. 5, No. 3 Free Spring 2015



**Glasgow Pub
of the Year**
(for the second time
in three years!)

THE STATE



**Inside: Pubs news / Maclays / 40 years of CAMRA in
Scotland / Bute Brew Co / New Breweries / G-RAF**

Save the dates

**Paisley Beer Festival
22–25 April 2015**



**Glasgow Real
Ale Festival
25–27 June
2015**

Volunteers needed

Visit glasgowrealalefestival.co.uk or paisleybeerfestival.org.uk
to register. You must be a CAMRA member

The end of the parasitical pubcos?

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CAMRA is part of the European Beer Consumers' Union.

LATE LAST year the welcome news arrived that new legislation will give pubs more rights when dealing with the big pub companies who own so many of them. This is a massive victory for pubs and drinkers, and CAMRA is proud to have played a part in putting pressure on the Government.

Some big pub companies charge their tenants over 40% more for their beer than the market rate – so the middleman makes more money on a pint than either the brewer or the publican does! That is grossly unfair and is what the new proposals aim to put a stop to.

But at present the legislation will only apply to England and Wales.

CAMRA will continue to lobby the Scottish Government to implement the same protections for tied tenants in Scotland. Several Scottish breweries including Williams Bros and Harviestoun have joined in urging Holyrood to follow suit.

2014 has seen a welcome growth in the number of Glasgow pubs selling real ale – and in the number of small breweries springing up in our area. Although we featured several new breweries in the last issue, it is our pleasant duty to report on still more openings in this one. But this too is linked to pubco reform – growth of choice for the drinker can only continue if there are pubs free to sell the beers their customers want to drink. Let us hope that the coming year will see great pubs blossom by serving great real ale!

Pub campaigners lobbied Westminster for a fair deal for tied pubs



Branch diary

Saturday 14 March
2015 Annual General Meeting and March Branch Meeting

Blackfriars, 36 Bell Street, Glasgow (downstairs), 1pm

Fri 3–Sat 4 April
Larbert Real Ale Festival

Dobbie Hall, Main Street, Larbert

Wednesday 8 April
Branch meeting

State Bar (downstairs), 7.30pm

Wed 22–Sat 25 April
Paisley Beer Festival
Town Hall, Paisley; see paisleybeerfest.com for details and beer list

Saturday 16 May
Branch meeting

Kilcreggan Hotel, Kilcreggan, 12.30pm

Thu 25–Sat 27 June
Glasgow Real Ale Festival

The Briggait, 141 Bridgegate, Glasgow
www.glasgowrealealefestival.co.uk

Visit www.glasgowcamra.org.uk for the latest news
Or follow @GlasgowCAMRA on Twitter
[facebook.com/GlasgowCAMRA](https://www.facebook.com/GlasgowCAMRA)

State Bar: Glasgow Pub of the Year



JASON LYONS of the State Bar was very pleased to collect the branch's Glasgow Pub of the Year award for the third time in eight years. The quality and variety of real ale on offer in the pub had led members to vote nearly unanimously for the State. Jason was presented with the award by branch chair Howard Young (left).

Photo: Tom Ord

■ Outside Glasgow the winning pubs are:

Argyll: Kilmartin Hotel, Kilmartin

Dunbartonshire:

The Ashton, Helensburgh

Lanarkshire: The Weavers, Strathaven

The overall Branch Pub of the Year will be decided later in the year and the winner go forward to the Scotland & Northern Ireland (SNIB) Pub of the Year final. The 2014 winner was the Steam Packet Inn, Isle of Whithorn.

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Alefest for Arrochar

ARRROCHAR IS TO see another real ale festival this year after last year's great success.

Organised by local CAMRA member Iain Dick, the event will feature 12 ales, six from Scotland and six from Yorkshire, including Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker and many other award winners with Yorkshire ales from the likes of Saltaire, Ilkley, Copper Dragon, as well as some favourite beers

from Scotland.

The festival will take place in the Three Villages Community Hall, Arrochar on Saturday 28th March from 12 until 10pm. A minibus will be providing transport from Arrochar to Helensburgh after the scheduled bus services finish at about 6pm. Entry will be £5 (£4 for CAMRA members with card) Designated drivers will be entitled to free soft drinks.



Looking for a pub?
whatpub.com

Making sense of the Good Beer Guide

YOU MAY have recently seen the 2015 edition of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide and wondered how entries to the Guide are selected.

You may perhaps have asked yourself "Why is my favourite pub not in here?" or even (but hopefully not) "Why is that dump in there?" The good news is that there's nothing mysterious involved. The even better news is that you can play a part in it.

All through the year, CAMRA members visit pubs throughout the area and rate the beer. Not the ambience, the music, the standard of conversation or the food, just the beer. This is done according to the 0-5 rating system where 0 equals "no real ale available" and 5 is the perfect pint. Ratings are entered on the Glasgow CAMRA website (headed "Rate our beer") – or using CAMRA's online pub guide WhatPub.

In January each year the branch holds

a selection meeting to short-list pubs for the forthcoming guide, based on member's ratings over the year.

These shortlisted pubs are then visited by members to check the beer quality and compile the wording for the entry.

The rating system is particularly valuable for pubs in some of the more remote places in our branch area. So if you visit a pub and sample some beer, take a few moments to record your scores. We also use these ratings to inform the choice of pub of the year for Argyll, Lanarkshire, Dunbartonshire and Glasgow.

Clearly, the more ratings that are submitted, the better picture we have of which pubs most deserve a place in the Guide.

So, even if you can't or don't want to attend meetings, you can still play a part in promoting good beer and highlighting the best places to get it. [bm]

Digital Guzzler

■ The Glasgow Guzzler is produced for people to pick up and read in the pub. But if you want to read it on your interwebular device, you can also get it online at issuu.com/glasgowguzzler, or glasgowcamra.org.uk



Members' Weekend

THE ANNUAL CAMRA Members' Weekend and AGM 2015 will take place in the heart of Nottingham at the historic Albert Hall.

Is CAMRA too close to Wetherspoons or other pub companies? Does (or should) the printed Good Beer Guide have a future in these days of smartphone apps? Should we promote so-called "craft" beer? How can we help save our pubs?

All these issues and more will be up for debate. Members' Weekend is where our members discuss our future policy and direction and offers you the opportunity to socialise with friends, attend the official AGM and workshops, visit pubs and go on organised trips. The Weekend is open to all CAMRA members.

Outside the hall, Nottingham offers plenty of drinking options to choose from, including one of England's oldest inns, Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem.

■ To pre-register for this event, please visit the Weekend website www.camraagm.org.uk. You just need to log in with your membership details and everything else is automatic!

SIBA gongs for Jaw and Loch Lomond

IT'S NOT often that a beer wins an award the very first time it's brewed. But that's just what happened with Jaw Brew's first dark beer, "Fathom".

The first gyle went to the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Scotland competition and won a silver award – as did the pale Jaw Drift. Not bad for a brewery that's only made three beers!

Owner Mark Hazell, right, has been working hard getting his beer into pubs, with a particular catch being his own local, the Burnbrae in Milngavie.

Awards also went to Alexandria's Loch Lomond Brewery: gold for Southern Summit, bronze for bottled Ale of Leven, and cask



Loch Lomond 60/- received silver.

Brewer Fiona MacEachern is pictured below (left) receiving an award from Tuggy Delap of SIBA (better known to *Guzzler* readers as Tuggy from *Fyne Ales*).



Local breweries in brief

WEST: The planned new brewery at Spiers Wharf has been abandoned. Instead expansion will take place at the existing site or nearby.

Tennents: A new alcohol-free lager is called Hee Haw.

Drygate: The pilot plant is now in full operation next to the main brewery. One-off bottled beers are produced on it. Regular cask beers have been launched: Pale Duke (4.0%), Reflex (4.2%) and Seven Peaks "Mosaic IPA" (5.0%). The brewery's bottled beer has been listed by Tesco.

More new breweries in 2015

■ An unprecedented number of new breweries are opening up in our area. Brewing or selling their first commercial beers as we go to press are **LAWMAN** from Cumbernauld and **MONLITH** in Glasgow.

Also Glasgow-based is **RIDE BREWING CO** which started up in late January and is based in the cellar of Drury St bar (opposite the Horse Shoe).

These three new outfits are tiny. Monolith brew 750 pints at a time, borrowing the studio

kit at Drygate. Ride make just 50 litres per batch.



Craig Laurie of Lawman brews in his kitchen! Craig is seen here with his very first metal casks.

■ *It's not all good news. We hear that Thorn Dhu brewery in Lochgair has closed after less than a year.*

A Bute of a brewery

NORMALLY TO BE fair to any brewing people I try to organise a brewery visit some time in advance but I just hadn't been able to do this with the very newly formed Bute Brew Co.

Thankfully owner and brewer Aidan Cavanan was about today, and was happy to let me come and visit as soon as I disembarked at the Rothesay ferry terminal,

It's only a 35 minute crossing from Wemyss Bay and so it wasn't long before I was approaching the large Rothesay pier complex. Aidan's directions were pretty straightforward and spot-on, with the large Bute Brew Co. sign possibly visible from the ferry if I had known where to look (it was designed by a friend – the Bute Brew Co lettering is encircled by a stylised beer barrel, a nice touch).

Aidan was good enough to spend a ridiculous amount of his valuable time chatting to me in the main room of the brewery, full of the brewing kit, benches, a long wooden bar and shelves displaying the forthcoming Bute Brew Co. bottled beers.

Formerly a teacher

of biology at both Kilsyth and Greenock, Aidan decided to take the plunge to start Bute Brew Co. at the start of 2014. With no real home-brewing experience he managed to get on a brewing course with PBC and he also managed to purchase a brand-new brewing kit after a last-minute cancellation. This was important as he really wanted to start the brewery up in the summertime – from talking to the pubs who were interested in taking local Bute beer it seems the summer trade is at least double that of the winter, and so starting with the weather still warm would allow him to make an impact.

It wasn't until the fifth full brew that Aidan had a beer that he was happy with – a definite 'eureka' mo-



ment. This was the Bute Red – a sweet, burnt, malty Irish red ale with a bitter kick from loads of Simcoe and Cascade hops. This was launched in the Kingarth Hotel and the Black Bull in Rothesay in August and literally sold out within hours, with both seasoned real ale drinkers and converted lager drinkers lauding his beer. Aidan has mostly managed to keep these two pubs stocked since that weekend and in the fermenters at the moment were the Red and a citra-hopped blonde beer, now called Autumn Days.

Aidan aims to participate in and sponsor events in Bute all year around, get the com-

munity engaged, and he has plans to organise a 'Bute Brew Co. + others' Beer Festival next year on the esplanade.

Aidan has done most of the conversion work in the brewhouse himself and also has plans to set up a beer garden.

Aidan definitely thinks there's an opportunity to grasp hold of in Bute. With the level of engagement with the local community that there has been so far I'm really hoping there's a bright future for the Bute Brew Co.

ADAM SHAFI

- The branch had a successful social outing to Rothesay in the summer and all judged the Bute beers very good. Once the weather gets better again we plan to repeat the trip to visit the brewery.

• Read Adam's blog at walkingandcrawling.blogspot.com



G-RAF is back!

AT THE end of June last year, over 2,000 people (and some giraffes!) descended upon the historic Brigait building for the first Glasgow Real Ale Festival for a long time.

Rather than waiting another 18 years, the Branch has

decided we should repeat the event this year – we are pleased to announce that the 2015 G-RAF will be held in the Brigait between Thursday 25 June and Saturday 27 June.

We will have over 100 beers and ciders – the best real ales available from throughout

Britain, together with a selection of foreign beers.

For full information, please see www.glasgowrealalefestival.co.uk, Facebook www.facebook.com/Glasgowrealalefestival and Twitter @GlasRealAleFest.

Photos: Euan Fraser



Concern over collapse of Maclays pub group

PUBS BELIEVED SAFE – COULD TENNENT’S STEP IN?

SHORTLY BEFORE this issue of the *Guzzler* went to press, the news broke that Maclay Inns, operators of well-known real ale pubs like the Three Judges, Village Inn and Tullie Inn, had gone into administration.

Maclays had invested considerable sums in the last couple of years in opening new ventures such as the Hope, the Raven and Munro’s in Glasgow. The administrators speak of an “unexpected funding requirement”

which presumably could not be met from the company’s over-stretched finances.

However, the good news is that the pubs themselves are believed to be sound and profitable businesses, so are to continue trading at least in the short term. The administrators told the trade magazine *DRAM* “we will trade the company with a view to a sale.” Interest had already been shown, it was said.

Tennent Caledonian – which already owns



SAFE FOR NOW: Currently no threat to Maclays pubs like the Three Judges, say administrators

25% of Maclays – is at present saying only that it will work with the administrators to “optimise value for all stakeholders.”

It should go without saying that CAMRA hopes all the pubs will continue trading with a continued focus on real ale. [rp]

Real ale returns to Glasgow pub – after 54 years!



■ The **IMPERIAL BAR** in Howard St is now selling Deuchars and Caledonian 80/--. The interesting thing about this is that we can say with unusual precision when the pub last sold real ale – a staggering *fifty-four years ago* to be exact.

The bar, Maitland’s Bar as it was then, belonged to Edinburgh brewery T&J Bernard. When Scottish Brewers took over and closed Bernard’s in 1960,

one of the first things they did was send their sales reps around all their newly acquired customers to tell them that in future, they would be getting McEwan’s and Younger’s beer, and it was all going to be keg.

Since then, the bar has been a faithful purveyor of Export and Tartan – until now! Anyway, if you like Deuchars, the Imperial is a splendid wee bar well worth a visit.

It seems to be en vogue for pubs to take names implying that beer is made on the premises. Following on from the **PARTICK BREWING CO** (formerly Partick Tavern), which brews nothing, the **CRAFTY PIG BREWHOUSE AND SMOKE PIT** has opened on Great Western Road (formerly Hubbards and then **LUAC**). It also brews nothing. There are handpumps but there was nothing on them when we called in to check.

It remains to be seen what effect the takeover of the Spirit pubco by Greene King will have. There are relatively few Spirit pubs in our area but some have

Around the branch area

■ 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 @GlasgowGuzzler.

recently begun selling real ale. Going by **GK's** running of the Belhaven pubs they already own, it is questionable whether the choice of real ale will improve much, if at all.

As soon as the last *Guzzler* went to print saying the **HALT BAR** hadn't shut down, the pub was padlocked and furniture taken out. However, the premises are now being refurbished by Glasgow brewery West,

who are re-opening it under the name **WEST ON THE CORNER**. Sadly the Edwardian bar and separate snug have been ripped out. **CAMRA** wrote to the brewery asking for these features to be preserved, but our concerns fell on deaf ears. The bar sells only West's own beers, so there is now no real ale.

The **ANCHOR LINE** on St Vincent St is a very swish establishment in the former building of the Anchor shipping line. No real ale.

LOKS BAR AND KITCHEN, Newlands is offering one cask ale.

Chicago-born **Jehad Hatu** is running a series of "pop-up" bars around the city under the name **GRUNTING GROWLER**, dispensing American and British microbrews from the keg, to drink there or take away in 2-litre "growlers". No cask beer but **Jehad** is considering it for the future.

In East Kilbride the **OYSTERCATCHER** and the **KITTOCH** have started selling real ale.

The former **Strathvale** in Strathbungo reverted briefly to its

old name, the **KIND MAN**, and is now the **RUM SHACK**. As you might have guessed from the name, no real ale.

The former **Corona** in Shawlands is now the south side branch of **BUTTERFLY & PIG** and real ale has been introduced.

The longstanding **Merchant City COURT BAR** has closed after the owners retired. Rumour has it the bar has been bought by a PR company from Aberdeen.

Pivo Pivo in the city centre is now **KITTY O'SHEA'S**. No real ale.

The **BEECHWOOD** in Kings Park has become a **Flaming Grill** restaurant.

Tradeston's BINGHAMS is no longer a pub and now sells ice cream.

The **TWISTED THISTLE** in Old Kilpatrick has three handpumps serving **Kelburn** and rotating other beers.

The **JOHN FAIRWEATHER** in Cambuslang is the latest **Wetherspoon** outlet in the branch area.



Getting things right

■ The **VALE** bar re-introduced real ale about a year ago and it has been a big success. The pub seems permanently busy and hardly needed to attract new customers, but it's now become a convenient spot for casketeers boarding or leaving a train at Queen St station. The **Vale** is not tied and thus able to offer a range of beers from the likes of **Oakham**, **Kelburn**, **Jaw** and **Isle of Skye**. The staff all drink real ale themselves – which is always a good sign!

Glory hallelujah – there's beer in the east end!



AT LAST pub crawls in Glasgow no longer have to end abruptly at High Street.

As the last edition of the *Guzzler* reported, DRYGATE opened in the summer on the Tennent's site with two micro-breweries, a restaurant, beer hall and bottle shop.

Now comes news of two real ale outlets on Duke Street. Both of these have a bright and cheery appearance and are geared up for diners. My first visit to the DUCHESS OF DUKE ST at number 380 was a disappointment though, with no cask beer available and the bar person unable to say when there might be some. On my second visit there was beer and it tasted fine but what was it? There was no badge and the barman knew it was from Cairngorm but wasn't sure which one!

REDMOND'S is a few hundred yards west



at number 304. It has a variety of keg beers, including from West Brewery and Williams, and one cask beer. On my first visit it was Inveralmond Lia Fail in very good condition. Unfortunately on my next visit, six days later, it was the same beer and the same cask, just about finished but well past its best. The



barman explained that demand was slow and there was no new beer ready to go on so I'd settle for a bottle of Birds and Bees.

The story seems familiar so far. The fact is if we want to see new outlets providing good quality beer consistently, they have to be supported. If you live in that area, why not have a pint in one of these locals before you jump on the bus into town? If you're in town, why not take an occasional trip east (it's only five minutes by bus from High Street or a short walk from Bellgrove station). Let the east end flourish!

BRIAN MCATEER

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.

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

Pub discounts

Members of CAMRA benefit from discounts in a number of pubs. Visit glasgowcamra.org.uk for full details.

■ **The *Guzzler*** welcomes letters from readers. So if you disagree with something in the magazine, or have something regarding beer or pubs you want to get off your chest, drop us a line: theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk

Branch history: Boyd on Blackpool

2014 marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of the first CAMRA branch in Scotland. Veteran activist ALISTAIR BOYD told us a huge number of anecdotes from the early years of the branch – some of them even printable. Here, for the first time is the story of the “Blackpool Bus”.

THE GLASGOW & West of Scotland Branch of CAMRA had been formed in 1974, quickly followed by others in Edinburgh, Tayside and Aberdeen, but it can reasonably be argued that the true birth of Scottish CAMRA was on a coach to the National AGM in Blackpool in 1977.

On that bus was a motley crew who barely knew each other, but who were fated to play their parts in the growth of the Campaign, not only in Scotland but in some cases nationally. One rose to be Chief Executive and a couple of others achieved the status of National Executive members. Sundry others led the Campaign in Scotland as Scottish Organiser or, later, Director. Despite the exalted titles their chief bond was, like all the others aboard the bus, a burning desire to swallow as much

decent beer as they could lay their grubby hands on.

This had its problems – particularly marital ones and travelling on that fateful coach led directly to four divorces. Two of the culprits, who had been little more than nodding acquaintances prior to sharing a room in Blackpool, found themselves sharing a flat three months later, having been shown red cards by fuming spouses as soon as they returned. The third member of the gang of four hardly counts, as he was already an established serial divorcer, but the fourth miscreant can fairly be described as having committed marital suicide when he, as the bus arrived back in Glasgow on its return, had it diverted straight to his home where, at about ten thirty of a Sunday evening, he invited everyone to join him in drinking his home brew. Your scribe

spotted the (then) wife standing with folded arms gathering her wrath and declined the kind offer – however, half of the bus accepted. The coach, which should have returned to Glasgow about five hours earlier, then dropped the marginally saner residue in George Square.

As for the AGM itself, it must be sadly admitted that our band of brothers played little part. Some, and not only those who were not CAMRA members at the time, never attended the debates at all and of those who did, it was mainly somewhere to sleep when the huge beer festival that accompanied the event was closed. On the Saturday afternoon, while Blackpool’s pubs were closed, a significant number of our travelling band decided that a football match between Blackpool and Bolton Wanderers held more appeal than the debating chamber.

It was on the Sunday, after the debates finished, that our heroes found nirvana. They had packed their bags after breakfast and paid their B&B costs, including a mystery item “FWTB 50 pence”,

which, it was explained upon enquiry, meant “For Wetting The Bed”. Although there was no evidence pointing to a culprit, blame has historically been attributed to a student who had travelled down on the bus but was not returning with us. If you were that student and are reading this, there is no point in proclaiming your innocence now!

As the afternoon drew on the bar license expired, the lights dimmed and the great majority of those attending headed home. Not so the Scottish contingent. Even in semi-darkness we could find our way to the abandoned bar and help ourselves. Jollity abounded for a couple of extra hours until our bus driver appeared. He had been to our digs, collected our baggage and made his way to the hotel to collect the villains. This explained the late arrival back in Glasgow.

Despite all this mayhem, CAMRA in Scotland survived and went on to be the upright organisation we all love today.

No names have been revealed to protect the culprits – not that they deserve it!

Callum's caters with cake for convivial commemoration of the Campaign

A SUNNY, SEPTEMBER Saturday saw 50 or so CAMRA members gather at Callum's in Johnstone to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Glasgow and West of Scotland branch of CAMRA — the Campaign's first branch in Scotland (although the occasion was also used to celebrate 40 years of the Campaign in Scotland). Like any good birthday party, there was even a cake!

The venue was chosen as the closest real ale venue to the original meeting place — the long-gone Golf Inn in Bishopton. Although both are now within the neighbouring Renfrewshire branch, back in 1974 we covered a much larger part of the West of Scotland!

A number of CAMRA worthies were there, including the Scottish National Director, Ray Turpie, and the National Chairman, Colin Valentine.

Those that could fit into the small-ish front room had the chance to hear a number of tales from the early days — although defamation laws prevent me from repeating some of these! The stories demonstrated was just how active and committed these early pioneers were, and how much they enjoyed socials!

It is clear that CAMRA has changed a lot over its 40 years in Scotland. Then, as now, however, we



Photo: Stuart McMahon

are dependent on our members. If you are not currently a member, please think about joining. If you are already a member, please come along to one of our meetings or socials and help us campaign for real ale!

JONATHAN KEMP



Twenty years ago

THE LEAD story in the Spring 1995 issue of the *Guzzler* was that the Glaschu Brewery was threatened with closure. Glaschu was one of the city's earliest brewpubs, but in a shock move was refused planning permission, after first having been told it was not needed.

The brewery owner, Duncan McGregor, said "We are gutted ... we feel as if we've been stabbed in the back by Glasgou District Council."

Elsewhere in the magazine, a reader's letter

complained about one particular Merchant City pub charging an extortionate £1.85 a pint.

With Maclays today going through some troubles, it is sobering to note the regard in which the then still-brewing concern was held in 1995. We had awarded the Maclays-owned Three Judges Glasgow Pub of the Year, and its team Helen McCarroll and Charlie Rennie Landlord of the Year for the fourth year on the trot. We also reported on the Judges hosting the launch of a new Maclays beer, the 3.8% Broadsword. Maclays' head brewer Duncan Kellock even phoned the pub on the evening to find out what we thought of it. Fortunately for him, it went down very well!

[rp]



As others see us

A Highland visitor gives his impressions of a beer-drinking trip to Glasgow

I HAD NOT visited Glasgow before other than to go to the airport, and asked some of my fellow committee members about places to go.

Using their suggestions, and the details on WhatPub – what a great resource – mapped out an over-ambitious (so it turned out) schedule for the two days.

Arriving about mid morning, my first call was Bon Accord. What a great place, I could have stayed there all day! The owner, Paul, certainly knew his stuff, and the walls are adorned with awards.

I ended up with a pint of Citra Burst (Alechemy), at 5.4% probably not the best way to start a long(ish) day. My preference is for hoppy IPAs, which was why I went for it and happy with my choice.

In Henglers Circus a pint of Isle of Skye Tiny Angels was not very inspiring. Having not had it before I had nothing to compare it against so I did not know what to expect, but others have raved about it. Not sure if it was towards the end

of the cask, or just not well kept, but finished “with resentment”.

I did not intend to call in to the State Bar, but on peeking through the window saw an island bar, and just had to go in for a look. The look became a half pint of Highland Jack Flag and spoke to the manageress who explained that all pints were £3.00, and halves £1.50, although the higher ABV beers were £3.50. There is a cross subsidy at the £3.00 price point. Some places in our branch area do this, but some still have different prices for different beers.

In The Merchant I asked for a half of Ale of Leven (Loch Lomond) and on finding out it was £1.85, asked how much a pint was – £2.15! I had the half tipped into a pint glass, and topped up.

In the evening my wife and I went to “The 78” because it was not too far from where we were staying. Although we are not veggies, the WhatPub write-up was very encouraging.

What a shame – the barman forgot to order any casks and so the hand pumps were dry!

I had a bottle of Williams Heather Ale and some good food.

Apparently, the ownership has changed recently, and the lady I spoke to there said that improvements were going to be made. Hopefully the improvements will be that beer gets ordered and is regularly available!

On Thursday I walked over to Three Judges, via the Transport Museum, and met with a police cordon who were dealing with an unexploded WW2 bomb. An excellent pint of Lock, Prop & Barrel (Houston), before going on to Tennents.

What a bewildering selection! I went for a pint of Icebreaker (Navigation) and was not disappointed. I spoke to two older guys who were obviously into their real ale, one was sticking to London Pride, the other Icebreaker. They offered to buy me a second pint but mindful of being pushed for time, I accepted their generosity with a half of Liberation Ale (Liberation – Jersey) which was outstanding!

They asserted that

the quality at The Three Judges had dipped over the last few months. Having only been there once, my pint was excellent, so I could not comment.

I am envious that within a short distance there are so many excellent pubs and I would not hesitate in recommending them all. All those that I visited over the two days all had at least 10 hand pumps on and were all busy!

I was annoyed not to have made it over to Babbity Bowsters & Blackfriars, but maybe another time...

Finally, I would encourage everyone to use WhatPub to seek out places to try, not just in Glasgow, but some of the nearly 37,000 pubs around the UK. If you find the details incorrect, just message the branch who will, I am sure, be happy to edit the listing or, if necessary visit themselves. It is so important to have complete and accurate information.

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PUBS OFFICER,
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01/15

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