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from the
Tayside Branch of CAMRA
Summer / Autumn 2023**



Hooked ON ALE



**All the latest
Real Ale News
and Features
from**

CAMRA Tayside Branch



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Hello and welcome to the latest issue of Tayside CAMRA branch magazine HOOKED ON ALE

Welcome to the latest issue of "Hooked on Ale". I hope you are all hale and hearty.

Since the last issue earlier this year, the branch AGM was held in June at Mennies, Dundee. A full list of the new branch committee can be found within the pages of this issue. Another important development from a Tayside branch perspective was a meeting of the organising committee for CAMRA's Members Weekend and AGM which is returning to the Caird Hall Dundee on the 26-28th April 2024. Further information will become available in due course especially how local CAMRA members can volunteer to help out at this event.



More recently, we received shocking news when we heard that Kenny Fraser of the Erich Alehouse in Blairgowrie had suffered a sudden illness which has led to the temporary closure of this fine real ale pub. We all wish him a speedy and full recovery. News like that puts things in perspective.

The Tayside area 'Pub of the Year' awards were well received. You can find details of our award winners in this magazine on pages 10 and 11. The Scotland and Northern Ireland Branch POTY awards were announced on 22 July. The overall winner was the Hillend Tavern, near Dalgety Bay. Our own Speedwell Bar (Mennies) was a commendable runner-up with the Bull, Paisley in third place.

I hope we can continue making Pub of the Year awards although we do depend on local and visiting CAMRA members scoring beer on CAMRA's WhatPub.

As always, a massive thank you to all our advertisers, regular and new, without whose support we would not be able to produce Hooked on Ale. Also to my fellow branch members who continue to provide informative and interesting articles which I hope you enjoy reading.

Look after yourself and enjoy your ale responsibly.

CHEERS THE NOO,

Kenny Smith Branch Chair

www.tayside.camra.org.uk

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Disclaimer: The views contained within **Hooked on Ale** do not necessarily represent the views of CAMRA, the editor or the Tayside Branch.

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newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk

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Tayside Pub News

Since the last issue of Hooked on Ale earlier this year, it is clear that the pub trade is still experiencing difficulties in the current economic climate from rising costs and lower footfall as people tighten their belts. Sadly, from a branch perspective there is little positive news to report in this issue of Hooked on Ale.

Notable pub closures are the Brown Horse in Brechin, the MacDonald Arms in Balbeggie and the Cyprus Inn in Bridge of Earn. Malkys Bar in Perth has also closed although there are rumours (and reported in the local press) that it may reopen under the old Greyfriars name. Hopefully the handpulls have been kept in storage. Perhaps the biggest shock has been the sudden (we hope temporary) closure of the Ericht Alehouse in Blair due to landlord Ken Fraser's illness. Ken has been a stalwart of the Tayside real ale scene with Ericht winning Tayside Pub of the Year and Perthshire Pub of the Year on numerous occasions. We all wish him well and a speedy recovery and hope to see him behind the bar again soon.

Other closures have been Mucky's in Perth, Innis and Gunn (formerly Beer Kitchen) in Dundee and Doc Stewarts in Perth. All of these are former real ale pubs. There are rumours of others struggling and an uncertain market for those choosing to

retire and sell. There is a possibility that the Fortingall Hotel may be the subject of a community buy out if it doesn't sell privately. Tormaukin Hotel in Glendevon has gone to being a resident only hotel. Those annotated as with occasional real ale in the Tayside Pub List (page 8) may be a reflection of trading levels at non-peak times.

Now for the good news and all from Dundee. Real ale has been re-established in the Pillars. However, I would say that the best news is the return of the Star and Garter (below) in Union Street with real ale available from day one. Luckily the pub name



was found in the cellar after the closure of predecessor Dynamo. Also, in Dundee and open since January is Discovery Beers (next to the Queens Hotel) where craft bottles and cans can be taken away or consumed on the premises. There's also a small selection of keg craft.

Let's hope that by the next issue of Hooked on Ale there is a more positive outlook and lots of good news to report.

Current real ale pubs that we know of are listed on page 8. Full details of these pubs can be found on our website www.tayside.camra.org.uk

Remember, if you have any news about your local, please email: whatpub@tayside.camra.org.uk And finally, we are reliant on you, whether CAMRA members or not, passing on information about pubs and breweries in the Tayside area. So even if not having a beer, if you are passing a pub and it is convenient, why not just pop your head around the door and see what is going on.

By Jim McMahon

Tayside CAMRA Branch Diary

For details of branch meetings and social events, please visit the branch website:

www.tayside.camra.org.uk

All Tayside CAMRA members are welcome to attend meetings and social events but please always check the Tayside CAMRA branch website or the branch Facebook page prior to meetings and socials to confirm venue and start time.

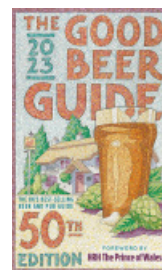


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Phone: 01241 434 433

Tayside Real Ale Pubs

As at 1 August 2023, the following Pubs, Hotels and Clubs (in some cases members and guests only) are known to sell 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. Those when real ale not always available annotated O. W denotes real ale usually served at weekends. K denotes keykeg dispense.

Angus

Arbroath

Corn Exchange
Lochlands (O)
Old Boatyard

Brechin

Brechin Arms
Caledonian Hotel

Carnoustie

Station Hotel

Forfar

Osnaburg

Glen Clova

Glen Clova Hotel

Hillside (by Montrose)

Hillside Hotel (O)

Kirriemuir

Airlie Arms Hotel

Letham

Commercial Inn (C)

Memus

Drovers Inn

Montrose

George Hotel (O)
Market Arms

Dundee & District

Broughty Ferry

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

Dundee

Bank Bar
Counting House
Frews (W) (O)
Market
Pillars
Phoenix
Speedwell (Mennies)
Star & Garter (O)

Kinross-shire

Cleish

Up In Arms (W) (O)

Kinross

Kinross Golf Club
Loch Leven Brewery Tap
Muir's Inn

Milnathort

Village Inn

Scotlandwell

Well Inn

Wester Balgedie

Balgedie Toll Tavern

Perth City

Bunker
Capital Asset
Cherrybank Inn
Craft Beer Bottle Shop (K)
Cullach (K)
Glover Arms

Old Ship Inn
Silvery Tay
Twa Tams (C)

Perthshire

Abernethy

Crees Inn

Ardler

Tavern (O)

Auchterarder

Auchterarder Golf Club

Blair Atholl

Atholl Arms Hotel
Wasted Degrees (K) (W)

Blairgowrie

Blairgowrie Golf Club
Ericht Ale House (C)
Fair o Blair
Stormont Arms

Bridge of Earn

Cyprus Inn

Comrie

Melville, Royal Hotel

Crieff

Tower Gastro Pub

Dunkeld

Royal Dunkeld Hotel
Perth Arms
Taybank Hotel

Dunning

Kirkstyle Inn

Fortingall

Fortingall Hotel

Glendevon

Tormaukin Hotel (O)

Glen Farg

Bein Inn

Kirkmichael

Kirkmichael Hotel

Lawers

Ben Lawers Hotel

Meikle

Kinloch Arms

Meikleour

Meikleour Arms Hotel

Moulin

Moulin Inn

Pitcairngreen

Pitcairngreen Inn (O) (C)

Pitlochry

Auld Smiddy
Old Mill Inn

Weem

Ailean Chraggan

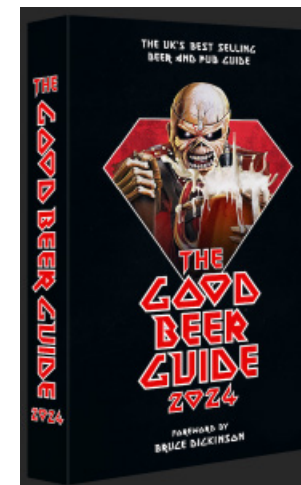
If your local pub, hotel or even club serves 'real ale' or 'real cider or perry' and is

not included in this listing please let us know.

Up to date information can be viewed on www.whatpub.com

To find out which of the above pubs are listed in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2024, why not buy the guide or download the Good Beer Guide App. For more information, visit CAMRA's website

www.camra.org.uk



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Tayside Pub of the Year 2023

In light of the difficult times faced by the hospitality trade over the past few years, Tayside CAMRA branch committee felt it important to acknowledge the efforts made by pubs across the branch region by introducing Pub of the Year (POTY) for each of the main geographical areas within Tayside, namely, Angus, Dundee City (including Broughty Ferry), Perth City, Perthshire, and Kinross-shire.

Our 2023 winners are:



Angus – Market Arms, Montrose (above)

Kenny Smith (Branch Chair) presenting Angus POTY award to the Market Arms Team



Dundee and Overall Tayside POTY – Speedwell Bar (Mennies) (above)

Jonathan Stewart receiving Dundee and Tayside POTY awards from Kenny Smith

Kinross-shire – Village Inn, Milnathort (right)

Richard Barnes (Membership) presenting Kinross-shire POTY award to Stephen Don (Licensee) with former Landlord, David Don behind Bar. Also pictured Jim McMahon (right) and Ian McNab (Fife CAMRA)



Perth City – Old Ship Inn (left)

Tina McLaren receiving Perth City POTY award from Bill Hoy (Vice Branch Chair)

Perthshire – Erich Alehouse, Blairgowrie (right)

Ken Fraser receiving Perthshire POTY award from Kenny Smith



Congratulations not only to all our winners but also a huge thank you to all the 'real ale' outlets in Tayside continuing to serve our favourite tipple.



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Tayside Brewery News

Inveralmond Brewery - News of the demise of Lia Faill reported in the last issue of Hooked on Ale was premature. With great pleasure it can be confirmed that Lia Faill is still available in cask.

Law Brewery (www.lawbrewing.co.uk) - Danny Cullen (owner & brewer) advised that the last few months has seen a shift of selling more cask beer over kegs which is partly a result of several venues in Dundee closing due to the economic climate. He has also concentrated on trying to increase sales distribution area beyond Tayside by targeting Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeenshire outlets with some success. Other routes such as collaborations and various commissions have resulted in good PR stories and increased revenue for Law Brewery:

- Produced a limited edition of 100 bottles of 'Splice the Mainbrace' Rum Oaked & Tay Conditioned 90/- Scotch Ale, the World's first underwater conditioned beer to celebrate 200 years since the Unicorn's assembly in 1822 with all profits going to the Unicorn Preservation Society.
- Became a 'She Town' Brewery to celebrate 'International Woman's Day' on 8th March 2023 with six talented local girls and brewed up a special Belgian Dubbel Ale named HellBroth.
- Undertook a sensory analysis of beer samples during a case studentship with Abertay University investigating the effect of prolonged maturation on the flavour of lager. The lager from this project was coincidentally used to provide a commemorative beer for the 11th WUKF World Karate Championships 2023 in Dundee, named 'Kokumi Lager' as a homage to the origins of karate and introduce Kokumi (Japanese for 'rich taste') as the new sixth taste sensation due to 'Kokumi-active' compounds excreted



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from the yeast during maturation.

- Supplied the James Hutton Institute with a 'Gold Standard' Pale Ale for their stand advertising the forthcoming 'International Barley Hub' at The Royal Highland Show 2023.

Danny believes more creativity and community led projects and future collaborations will help overcome some of the forthcoming challenges ahead for breweries.

MòR Beers (www.morbeers.co.uk) - Dominic Hughes (owner & brewer) informed Hooked on Ale that MòR beers are become available further afield in Scotland and the beer range is increasing. MòR used to have four beers typically available, now it's around seven and as it's summer – Ticia a 4.5% ABV dark ale brewed exclusively with New Zealand hops Motueka and Wakatu is back. Light citrus lime and vanilla hop notes complement the dark chocolate malts for a smooth dark ale with a twist.

Pubs often ask why MòR don't brew Ticia in the winter, when it's darker. Dominic (owner and brewer) explained that the reason is that they don't buy it then. It's the same as the bottles, he can't just package a small amount and keep it fresh for a few customers to order sporadically. Dark ale is great all year, but in winter sales are generally lower, and most pubs go down to just one pale or throw in a much larger cask breweries dark beer, whereas in summer sales are up and pubs rotate in more choice.

Pubs typically think one beer is the same as another either because of the style or the theme. A dark ale is a dark ale. A rugby six nations beer is just that. It doesn't matter that the MòR version is a completely different style and flavour – if a pub already has a rugby beer then they aren't interested in another one. Dominic found the same with the late summer special Stand-Up, previously brewed to celebrate the Edinburgh Fringe, but now available all summer as MòR can't compete with the sales might of Stewarts or the other stalwarts releasing timed themed beers. So, the big news is: Stand-Up 4.2% ABV Session IPA brewed with Eclipse and El Dorado delivering bright zesty mandarin citrus hop flavour is available all summer, along with Ticia!

Dominic also advised that his plans for a brewery taproom are currently on hold although an upturn in the current economic climate may lead to reconsideration on this.

NAT 20 Brew (Cultybraggan, Comrie) - Just south of Comrie off the B827 is the last surviving Prisoner of War camp in Scotland. Cultybraggan (POW Camp 21) now managed by the Comrie Development Trust is run as both a working museum and also a business gateway for local businesses. Amongst the businesses using the former camp huts, you will find a unique brewery, Nat 20 Brew, located in Hut 53. Owned by two CAMRA members, it's a microbrewery with a difference, making natural and historic beers. The brewery is as off grid as possible, producing their own power, gas & heating. The water comes directly from the surrounding mountains and is some of the purest water in Scotland. Four bottled beers form the Nat 20 line-up.

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Wasted Degrees (www.wasteddegrees.com) - Following consecutive years of double-digit growth, Perthshire's Wasted Degrees Brewing is fast becoming the largest independent craft brewer in the region and was also recently named Food & Drink Company of the Year at the Made in Scotland Awards.

Founded in 2016, Wasted Degrees is owned by two Perthshire brothers, Conall and Jack Low. The brewery now produces up to 20,000 litres of craft beer in cans and kegs per month from its 100% renewables powered brewhouse in Blair Atholl. Wasted Degrees beers are sold across the UK and exported across Western Europe. Cask is also distributed to select bars in Perthshire. The brewery has also recently begun offering cellar installs for keg across Perthshire in an effort to secure further growth locally.

Underpinned by a strong sense of social & environmental responsibility, the brothers

are both very driven by the impact they can have on their home region. A Living Wage accredited employer, the brewery also, provides free period products and takes steps to reduce the 'food miles' in its supply chain by championing local produce. Wasted Degrees was also recently a finalist in the Sustainable Business category at SIBA's BeerX this year, the only Scottish Brewery short-listed. It's clearly about more than just the beer for the team at Wasted Degrees.

Hooked on Ale welcomes updates from all Tayside breweries producing cask or bottled conditioned real ale. For future issues, please contact:-

newsletter@tayside.camra.org.uk

Forth Valley and Tayside CAMRA Social - Broughty Ferry 20 July 2023



Tayside and Forth Valley CAMRA members pictured in the Royal Arch, Broughty Ferry at the start of a joint branch social event on 20 July 2023. Tayside members, Kenny Smith, Bill Hoy and his good lady, Gregor Wallace and Mike Jarron were joined by fourteen Forth Valley members, George Howie from Aberdeen and one Fife member. The Social began in the Royal Arch (nearest to the station) before moving on to the Anchor, Jolly's, the Ship and ending in the Fisherman's. According to Kenny Smith (Branch Chair), 'A jolly good day was had'.



Where on Earth is Kinbuck? Another Thirstday Group Adventure

Sitting in the Fisherman's Tavern on one of our Thirstdays away from the Bank Bar, Mike asked, 'Do you fancy a trip to Kinbuck Beer Festival?' As I had a visit from a Virgin Media technician due on the Friday, we opted for the Saturday instead as there was no Fitba due to the league splitting (what a stupid idea!). Mobile phones produced by Gregor and Mike were consulted and the location of Kinbuck was ascertained to be just north of Dunblane. Train and bus timetables perused, a plan of action was put together entailing a train from Dundee to Dunblane and then a Hunters Executive Coaches service from Dunblane to Kinbuck. Later research by Garry revealed that the festival opening time was 14:00 and that there was a free shuttle taxi from Dunblane station; a rethink took place and we opted for the 12:15 train.

Saturday dawned a bit overcast and dreich, but with mounting excitement I got my bus into town; a new destination always excites me. Horror!!!! Only to arrive at the station to be met with news that the 12:15 was cancelled. A train at 11:56 was an option but only if the lads arrived in time. Mike arrived about 11:52, then Gregor just at 11:56. A quick conflag and we decide to push on and get the 12:53 and change at Stirling. Adjourning to the Star & Garter we enjoyed MòR Calm & Wise 3.8% ABV whilst we waited for the 12.53 train.

Sure enough, at Dunblane there was a notice directing us to the taxi pick-up point where we met Brian and his good lady from Forth Valley CAMRA. A well-oiled operation greeted us (it was the 13th Kinbuck festival after all) with our £7.00 (discount for CAMRA) entry taken, glass and programme handed over and £10.00 worth of tickets bought in no time at all.



Sixteen ales and four real ciders were on offer and a well filled room greeted us. After

getting our first half pints (Amarillo Gold 4.5% ABV from Hybrid for myself), Mike and I found space in another room whilst Garry and Gregor managed to find a spot in the main room. The table we squeezed into was occupied by a father and daughter plus friend; they made us most welcome, and a convivial afternoon was had. It turned out to be the girl's first beer festival (dad was a seasoned campaigner), and they were keen to get our opinion of the different ales, as they were drinking cider. We suggested Schiehallion as a starting point, which they both tried and enjoyed. Perhaps two new recruits for CAMRA. MòR Tea Vicar was going down a treat, with favourable comments being made. On getting my last half before departure (MòR Tea Vicar) I noticed a few of the ales were finished, a sign that the day had been a success.

The taxi back was just getting ready to depart when we came out of the hall. Following a quick trip back to Dunblane, and with a wee while to wait, Garry and Gregor adjourned to the Dunblane Hotel, whilst Mike and I took the more sober option and went for fish suppers.

The Glasgow - Dundee trains were back on allowing us to catch the 17:55 directly home to Dundee where a cracking pint of Loch Lomond Breweries Silky Stout 5.0% ABV in the Bank Bar completed a smashing day out. Plans are afoot to do it again next year (26th/27th April).

By Kenny Smith

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Edinburgh Ale by Tram

The opportunity arose recently to join some CAMRA friends in Edinburgh for a 'beer by tram' trip on the newly opened section down to Newhaven. Our guide was Dave from Musselburgh. My initial understanding was that it was to be a hop-on-hop off tour of real ale pubs, similar to one chronicled on the web involving 'Fizzy Beer & Gin' pubs.



We purchased our £5 day tickets at York Place as bus passes are not valid except for Edinburgh residents which Dave bemoaned doesn't stretch to Musselburgh. The terminus at Newhaven is actually quite short of Newhaven Harbour so a number 200 bus (the 16 also serves that bit of the route) was required to take us the three stops towards Granton where we alighted at Starbank Road across

the road from the Old Chain Pier pub. It is mainly food orientated with table service even for the beer of which four were on offer: three Fyne Ales and one Stewarts. We all went for Fyne Easy Breeze a nice light ale at 3.5% ABV served in excellent condition to start the day.

It was then across the road to the Starbank Inn. Another foodie place but with some bar seating, and four pumps with a selection of national and local beers. I opted for the Loch Lomond Bonnie and Blonde at 4% ABV, not too strong for a session beer and also served in really good condition.

Back on the bus, same numbers different direction to the Newhaven tram terminal. A walk round the corner, onto a disused railway line converted to the Hawthorne Vale Path (part of a network of old railway lines used for walking and cycling paths throughout Edinburgh), to the Dreadnought. (There is a bridge across the path though it was closed at the time of my visit.)

The Dreadnought is a 'Gender Inclusive' pub and has quite different ales from lesser-known brewers, both cask and craft. Amongst the offerings were a 10% ABV Porter, whose name I don't recall, The Hero in Pine Barrens, a 4.5% ABV West Coast IPA by Caps Off Brewery in Bishop Auckland, and Mellow Yellow a 4.7% ABV Banana and Tutti-Frutti Ice cream Sour Beer by Play Brew Company from Middlesbrough. I had a



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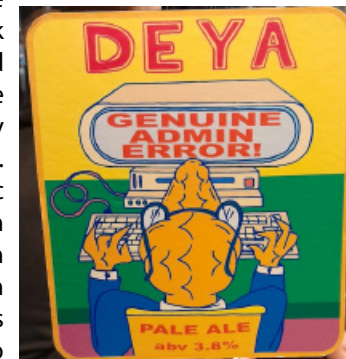
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pint of the Hero beer, a reasonably pleasant pint in good condition and was persuaded to try a half pint of the Mellow Yellow. Different, cloudy by design, but quite pleasant. I think a glass of it with my sweet tooth would be enough. Then it was back to the tram for a couple of stops to Port of Leith and a walk to Teuchters Landing, a restaurant with bar service and four taps. I went for the Tempest brewing co's White Light, a 4.7% ABV Citra & Chinook Hazy pale ale. Yet again well served and pleasant.

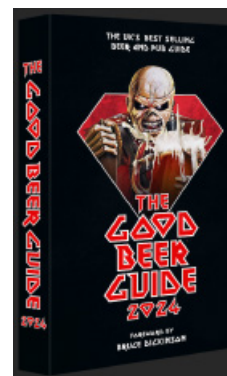
Another short walk took us to the Steel Coulson Shore and on the way our guide pointed out quite a few cask pubs of different qualities. The pub is named after an old brewery company. It had two taps with Deya Genuine Admin Error from Cheltenham, and Organic Thirsty Dog a vegan beer from Newt Brew of Musselburgh. The Deya was a 3.8% ABV pale ale and the Organic Thirsty Dog, 4.0% and according to the pump clip, an 'An organic pale ale on a bitter base, dry-hopped with Citra for a refreshing finish'. Both beers were served in very good condition and went down well. No food was being served but we were able to bring in take-aways to eat with our beers.



It was then a couple of minutes' stroll to the tram stop called The Shore for a tram to Haymarket, a quick half pint of Orkney Dark Island at Ryrie's, and the train back to Perth. Not quite the tram crawl I had anticipated but a few new pubs to me, and prospects for further adventures in that neck of the woods.

By Bill Hoy

The Good Beer Guide 2024 - Published 28 September



This year's guide is fronted by the legendary rock star Bruce Dickinson of Iron Maiden, whose own personal journey through the world of beer has also highlighted the importance of pubs, both in providing an early platform for success and as a welcome respite from the huge amount of work and energy that goes into being one of the most successful bands to come out of the UK.

The Good Beer Guide is CAMRA's way to keep pubs at the forefront of our campaigning. Recognising the vanguard of serving real ale and doing much more for the community than ever, pubs that get selected for the guide can be confident that they are amongst the best pubs in the country. With 4500 pubs listed in the guide, chosen by independent consumers this has been the best-selling beer and pub guide for over 50 years.

www.tayside.camra.org.uk

(Nearly) 50 Years of Tayside Branch

I was recently elected to the Branch committee, standing partly from guilt at recent inaction, and the lack of candidates! This much has not changed significantly since I helped found the, then, Tayside and Fife Branch in 1975/76, though I seem to remember there was more enthusiasm, including willingness to serve on committees, at that time. There was, of course, a sense of urgency back then as the Big Six Brewers continued their tour of destruction of small breweries and replacement of the cask-conditioned beer most of them produced with gassy, tasteless keg.

What was different now was that I received an email from CAMRA HQ Membership Team, congratulating me on my election and offering access to helpful sites to assist the job of committee member. To me this indicates the increasing professionalism of CAMRA as a campaigning organisation – it was once described as the most successful consumer organisation in Europe – and also reflects the increasing part IT, and social media, play in our lives. Back in the day, we were reliant on landline phones, often without answering machines, and basic newsletters produced on Roneo and Gestetner duplicating machines as campaigning tools. A friend of mine who worked in the upper echelons of Timex (remember them?) told me of a revolutionary character in New York who used the firm's computer system to produce, print and distribute a radical manifesto. This was an alternative version of propaganda and an indication of future developments, apart from the illegal element, that CAMRA would adopt.

As a member in those pioneering days, one gradually became familiar with the vocabulary and science of beer, brewing, pubs and campaigning: terms like wort (pronounced “wort”, not “wurt” in the Belhaven Brewery, I discovered, despite what the predominantly English HQ said), original gravity, beer from the wood, meetings to test support and beer exhibitions.

Speaking of the latter, which were really glorified tasting sessions, far from fully-fledged beer festivals, I have mixed memories of one of the Branch's first, in St Paul's Episcopalian Cathedral Hall, Dundee. The only access was by the front steps, and I remember the efforts of six of us heaving heavy wooden casks up these, as well as the increasingly common aluminium ones – you realised why they were becoming popular! I think the Beer from the Wood was Theakston's Best Bitter and Old Peculier. There was a near disaster when someone failed to switch off the heating while the beer was being stored overnight, but fortunately this was discovered before any damage was done. The Old Peculier was a favourite with a busload of students from St Andrews University a number of whom, in the words of Private Eye magazine's cartoon hero, Barry Mackenzie, chundered copiously in the Gents!

Having said that, Old Peculier had a myth attached to it, as had Marston's Owd Roger, but neither of these approached the strength of some of today's headbanging ales such as those at the upper end of the Brewdog scale!

One thing that is forgotten in these safety-conscious times is that the majority of Branch pub surveys were done by car. Buses and trains were used where possible, but in our area, stretching from Montrose to Inverkeithing and St Monans to Memus, there were (and are) many remote pubs with poor or no public transport services. The alcohol limit for drivers was much higher back in the '70's and '80's and chances were often taken by some people (fortunately with no repercussions) until the Designated Driver idea took hold. Many journeys were made, by various means, to check out potential Good Beer Guide candidates or simply reports of remote pubs. Standards for GBG entry were, by local tacit consent, somewhat elastic compared to nowadays, as there were so few real ale outlets and we – and tourists – were glad to find them. (1975 GBG Cover shown right and 1975 GBG Tayside entries below)



McEwan's, Younger's (usually the same beer under different labels), Belhaven, Maclay's and, to a lesser extent Lorimer & Clark were the main suppliers of real beer in our area, though that isn't saying much! The outlets were few, but as awareness of a market for cask beer was growing in Scotland. A significant breakthrough engineered, I think, by Dan Kane of Glasgow branch and a Scottish & Newcastle Breweries rep who liked real ale, brought McEwan's 80/- Ale to Glasgow, then Fife and eventually much of the rest of Scotland. This just goes to show how limited was the supply and variety of real ale in the early days. There was a surge of interest, often short-lived, in the '80's and 90's which led to its appearing in some unlikely places. I remember a journey from the Fort William area to Skye where pretty well every pub had it (not that there were many!) and it was generally acceptable (I wasn't driving!).



Today, I simply cannot keep up with today's mushroom growth of breweries and their beers all over Britain. When the local branch was formed, in the Windmill Bar, Hilltown, Dundee, on 11th June 1975, there were maybe 30 licensed premises – including one or two clubs – in Tayside & Fife serving cask beer, and these were reduced over the next few years as breweries were closed or ceased production. Now there are 30 pubs – the maximum branch allocation – in the Tayside section of the Good Beer Guide alone, and 10-12 small breweries.

CAMRA probably made a strategic error in ignoring

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Jolly's Hotel

43A Gray Street, Broughty Ferry
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The Corn Exchange

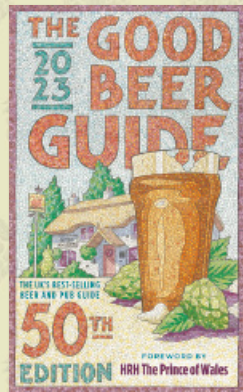
Market Place, Arbroath
Angus, DD11 1HR

The Capital Asset

26 Tay Street, Perth
Perth and Kinross, PH1 5LQ

The Fair O'Blair

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Perth and Kinross, PH10 6AB



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the spread of craft/keg beers, increasingly popular with younger folk, which it has to some extent rectified with a more generous approach after member consultation. To quote founder CAMRA member Graham Lees:

'What was bad about the keg beers of the past was that they were insipid, overpriced products, low in alcohol...you can't accuse the small craft brewers of that.'

Although an old fogey in my 80th year, I tend to agree with him. I still maintain CAMRA's promotion of cask-conditioned beer is essential: it's a unique heritage product, and a damned good one, when properly looked after, which is hard to beat. And the style covers all types of beer from lager to stout!

Problems can arise in pubs or café-bars with a low turnover. This was the source of the dispute within CAMRA over the Cask Breather method of dispense in the 1980's. This arose over a device which used a small amount of carbon dioxide, through a plastic valve, to help preserve the beer for longer. It did not significantly affect the taste – I know, because I tried beer served by it at the bar of the 1982 Bradford, which caused a bit of an outcry! Purists – which included most Scottish members – voted against it then, self included, but by 2000 the practical utility of it was accepted.

So it is with craft/keg beer, which lacks the overpowering gassiness of early keg and can add some variety in beer deserts or places where real ale has yet to catch on. In my experience – notably in Ireland, north and south -, while much of the pseudo-craft beer produced by the big brewers is dire, many of the small craft breweries produce fine beers. CAMRA started by trying to argue for choice in beer and it seems the wheel has come full circle.

By Forbes Browne

Champion Beer of Britain 2023

The Champion Beer of Britain was announced at CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival held in early August. The overall winners were:

Gold - **1872 Porter** (6.5% ABV) Elland Brewery
Silver - **Abbot Ale** (5% ABV) Greene King Brewery
Bronze - **Darwin's Origin** (4.3% ABV) Salopian Brewery

The Champion Bottled Beer of Britain award went to Green Jack Brewing's **Baltic Trader** (10.5%), with Hobsons **Dhustone Stout** taking silver and Five Kingdoms **McGregors Mild** awarded bronze.

Loch Lomond Brewery took the silver award in the IPA category with **Bravehop** and in the Session, Pale Ale and Golden Ales category, Swannay Brewery won gold with **Island Hopping**.



www.tayside.camra.org.uk

The following article is by Paul Hathaway, a CAMRA member living on Islay and is an account of a recent visit he made to Broughty Ferry. Paul very kindly agreed to this article being included in Hooked on Ale

By Plane, Train and Bus to... ...Broughty Ferry

Another trip to the Mainland and a further chance to explore new pubs in an unknown (to me anyway) town of Broughty Ferry but this time with a twist. In fact it could be two twists? The first is that I emailed Kenny Smith of the Tayside Branch to confirm some opening times of the town's pubs and invite any members to join me and secondly, noting my interest in brewing and pub history, to do some office-based research followed by an intense period of field research.

Looking at some details for Broughty Ferry in the Brewery History Society (BHS) Publication, *Brewers of the British Isles 1890-2021*, I saw that once there was a brewery standing in Fort Street by the name of William Gray & Son. Further on-line investigation of various 19th century Trade Directories and the National Library of Scotland map resources, I identified a number of things I would like to investigate while in the Town. More on this later.

Having set things up with Kenny, my plane from Islay to Glasgow Airport and Airport Express Service 500 To Glasgow City centre arrived in time for me to check into my hotel and leave my bag there ready to catch the 11.41 from Glasgow Queen Street to Dundee and then changing to the local service to Broughty Ferry. The ticket clerk at Queen Street Station advised that a 50% off deal was available, saving me more than my Senior Railcard would and, by having a split ticket, it would be even cheaper! You don't get that in a machine!

The trip to Dundee was uneventful. The refurbished Scotrail HST are a joy to travel on and, complete with upside down charging points, are simply the finest design since the Kenwood Chef Mixer was updated by Sir Kenneth Grange in 1960. Railway buffs will get the idea. Oh, all right then, Sir Kenneth also designed the High Speed Train 125.

Arriving at Dundee, a short transfer time allowed for a coffee and a sandwich there and the train to Broughty Ferry left on time and duly arrived as timetabled. Apart from beer, pubs and breweries, you may have gathered that I like railways. Using stations I have not been to before is another bonus on these research trips. Stopping at the Station to take several photographs, I entered our arranged meeting point, the nearby Royal Arch pub, so close to the Station that it was once called the Railway Tavern - or was it? The Post Office Directory of 1864-1865 listed the Railway Tavern in Gray Street run by George Thomson and the Royal Arch on Brook Street with Mrs Miller as licensee. It is not unknown for two adjacent pubs to merge and take either one name or an amalgamation

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of the two. Given the location of the pub at the junction of Gray Street and Brook Street, my guess is that may have been two separate businesses at one time but I'm open to offers. The 1871 Post Office Directory lists the Royal Arch Tavern as being in both Gray Street and Brook Street under the command of Mrs Miller. So, my guess is that they were indeed two separate pubs.



Inside I met Kenny and Mike and had a pint of Taylors Landlord (NBSS 2) not at its best we all agreed. While waiting for Gregor, we sat and talked about beer, what I would like to do and where to go on this short sojourn. The pub itself is a street corner pub with, what on the face of it is, one bar. There is plenty of dark wood, benches, chairs, and tables and with the sun shining through the stained-glass windows, it has a very nice atmosphere. Gregor joined us, told a terrible joke to which I replied with an even more terrible one and Gregor acknowledging that he might have met his match in that department. It set the tone for the rest of the day as the quality of the jokes declined as the number of pints increased.

The Royal Arch is named after the Arch that used to stand at the entrance to Dundee Docks and stood over the access to the pier that joined the Earl Grey Dock and King William IV Dock on Dundee's waterfront. Built between 1849 and 1853, it was demolished in 1964 for land development and in this respect, represents a link with the southern end of the railway at Euston whose historic arch was demolished around the same time for broadly similar reasons. Progress, eh? Back to the pub though and Kenny sent me off to look at the lounge bar which I didn't realise even existed. It is accessed through a door marked "Private" or via another one labelled "Toilets". It is worth the trip though as the lounge has a real art deco style and is today used as the pub's restaurant. 1930s ocean liners came to mind when opening the door into the bar.

Having established an Islay connection between Gregor and a musician friend of mine on Islay (you can't get away from the place) we moved onto the Ship Inn. This is a fascinating pub to me in that it looks so incongruous and out of place. However, it has been there along time, the earliest reference I can find to is the 1864-1865 Directory as the Ship Tavern under the control of Elizabeth Knight. The same Directory list a Mrs William Gall as licensee of the Life Boat Tavern which is also shown on the 1859 Ordnance Survey map but does not show the Ship Tavern. The pub stands on its own between two very narrow lanes and looks like it has been dropped into a gap in the site. It overlooks the sea as well. It is much bigger on the inside than it looks



from the outside (TARDIS Pubs, I call them or, as an estate agent would put it "deceptively spacious") in that it goes back a long way into a dark interior. The bar stands on the left just inside the door and was dispensing 2 beers. We sat at a table at the front of the pub, nicely located between one of the two large front windows and the bar. Looking around the pub, I'm guessing that it has had a couple of makeovers in days gone by in that some of the decoration is of the Gin Palace variety that was so popular in the pub improvement times of the late 1890s. I'd be grateful if anyone has any information on this. A friendly pub with a welcoming atmosphere, definitely worth visiting again. Kelburn Jaguar was had here and very, very good it was too (NBSS 4) while Harvistoun Bitter & Twisted was also available.



Around the corner from the Ship our next call was to the Fishermans Tavern Hotel. The building itself I would describe as rambling; indeed, it was at one time three cottages that have now merged together. Through the Pub's front door, we are met by a servery with six pumps. The bar, on the right, itself is small but comfortable with a light blue painted theme on the woodwork. There is a small snug on the left. The bar leads to a dining area. I met Ross Niven, former owner of the MòR Brewery so we had a quick meeting of the Former Brewery Owners Club, had a pint and then on with the tour. Four pumps were in use of the six available, dispensing Timothy Taylor Landlord, Orkney Corncrake Ale, Kelburn Pivo Estivo



and MòR Scode Dundee Pale Ale; I opted for the MòR and gave it a NBSS of 3.5. The pub has a plaque explaining it's connection with Bonnie Prince Charlie. Is he the Scottish Equivalent of Charles the Second or Queen Elizabeth I slept here? I am sure that the list of pubs in England claiming either a Charles or Elizabeth connection is longer than those that don't.

Pub number four was Jolly's Hotel, one time hotel run by John Jolly, now a 25 room Wetherspoons Hotel. The original front building is a black and white painted stone one but at the rear of this premises is a much larger light stone coloured, quite modern looking building, part of the 'Spoons 2014 refurbishment of this Hotel, whose entrance is found by walking past the side of the original hotel. Not, in my opinion, one of the most pleasing conversions by that Company, it is large and barn like with both bar and lounge like areas. The servery lies to the right and had the usual suspects but an interesting brown ale, Belhaven Burns Brown Ale, 4.2 % ABV which we all opted for. It was very good



too, getting a NBSS of 4 from me. Here I have to take issue with some philosophies that all beers brewed by larger Brewers (in this case by Belhaven out of Greene King) are rubbish and all beers brewed by small independent and micro brewers are wonderful. Not in my book they are not and don't start me on what Craft Beer is... We chatted to the Manager, who was well known to my CAMRA colleagues and a steady chat followed. We were also served by a very enthusiastic member of staff who not only told about the beers but also came out from behind the bar to enquire if we were enjoying our pints to which, I am pleased to say, we were. He was probably the most attentive and enthusiastic member of Wetherspoons' staff I have encountered and many a young person working in 'Spoons could learn a lot from him.

As the day was moving on, I wanted to see the sight of the William Gray Brewery in Fort Street. This is now occupied by the Fort Hotel. I am also researching the history of this brewery so if anyone has any photos,

stories or memorabilia please me know. I took a couple of photographs of the Hotel and we moved onto the Anchor Inn.

A comfortably full pub with Early Doors drinkers, the sole real ale was Harvistoun Bitter & Twisted so we had no choice but to try it. Not at its best but quite drinkable so a solid 2 on the NBSS scale. A fine anchor sign hangs on the exterior wall with a 1741 date. It has a central servery, covering three main areas. There is, as you might expect from the name, a nautical theme.

By now and with evening coming on Kenny suggested that we take a bus to Dundee for one last pint. A short walk to the bus top, a brief bus ride brought us to the Bank Bar. A former bank, with much ephemera to look at, there are bare floorboards and lots of alcoves in which to lose yourself. However, we didn't get lost and I enjoyed my pint of Theakston Old Peculier sat in the main area (NBSS 3). Incidentally, Peculier, nor Peculiar, was an ecclesiastical court in Masham where the Theakston Brewery is situated. Fortunately, it is also the closest real ale serving pub to the station which is fortunate as I didn't have far to walk to catch my train back to Glasgow.

It only remains for me to thank Kenny, Mike and Gregor for their company and I would thoroughly recommend Brought Ferry as a beer destination.

By Paul Hathaway



Lia Fail at Perth Beer Festival 2023

After the 2022 event suffered a late postponement, Perth Beer Festival finally happened again in early May 2023 for the first time since the pandemic and seemed bigger and busier than ever. They seemed to have dropped their old official rugby club name from the festival, but the Perthshire Rugby 7s games were all still happening, with the women's teams given greater prominence at last.

The weather forecast was foreboding and may have put off some of our more delicate local CAMRA members, although I suspect that late season football fixtures might have competed too. After a good walk across the North Inch, I wandered straight in to join a

Discounts for CAMRA Members

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

Perth- Glover Arms 20p per pint

Dundee - Speedwell (Mennies) 10%; Taybridge Bar 10%

Broughty Ferry - Royal Arch 10%; Fisherman's 10%

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Wetherspoon pubs in Tayside include **Counting House (Dundee), Jolly's Hotel (Broughty Ferry), Corn Exchange (Arbroath), Capital Asset (Perth) and Fair O'Blair (Blairgowrie).**

long queue to purchase tokens, the only way to be served at the bar. The weather was cold, but stayed dry, making the token queue just about bearable. Less attractive was the price, which worked out at a hefty £6 per pint. However, on reflection, there was a huge marquee erected, with some good live bands appearing throughout, and unusually for beer festivals these days, entrance to the Saturday afternoon event was free.

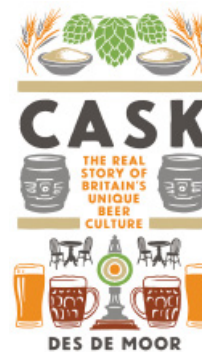
On entering the tent, I was dreading more queuing, but managed each time to get served quite quickly. The real ale bar had casks on stillage from dozen real ale breweries. I was expecting to see a local contribution of Ossian Ale from Inveralmond Brewery, and delighted to see that there were handpulls on the bar, exclusively serving Inveralmond cask ales – a pleasant surprise, considering that neither Inveralmond nor Innis & Gunn were listed prominently as sponsors. Alongside was the other ale I was desperate to see featured - Lia Fail – making a comeback after all the fake news of its demise, followed by delivery constraints to our pubs in Tayside. However, totally lost in all the excitement, was the poignancy of the occasion; Lia Fail is named after that Stone of Destiny, borrowed once again and shipped to Westminster for the King's coronation, that very same day - 6th May!



Along with several beers from other Scottish and English breweries (several with outdated dodgy names), the Inveralmond ales both tasted OK, but I am rarely enthused by presentation, aroma and flavour in plastic pints; yet to be realistic, a family-friendly outside event with contact sport would be out of line to dispense in glass. At least the familiar roast and chocolate flavours of the Lia Fail were all there. Wandering about the festival, I met up as I had hoped with some former Inveralmond colleagues, as well as two elusive CAMRA Tayside members – great to catch up with you all!

By Richard Barnes

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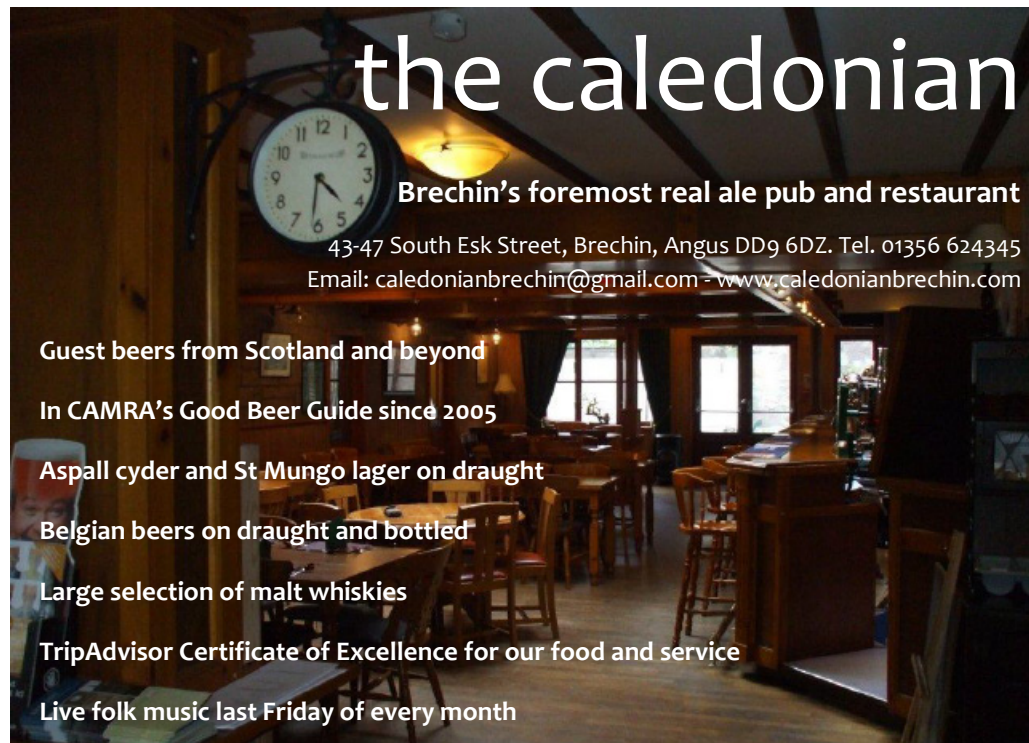
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Blair Atholl..A Good Day Out

For some months I had been planning a trip to Blair Atholl, with the specific purpose of beer scoring through WhatPub. Despite being on the main route to Inverness, with both the A9 and a railway station, very few trains and buses stop in the village, and very few beer scores appear for the wonderful Moulin ales served at the Atholl Arms Hotel.



No excuses for me! There is one direct bus a day each way from Kinross, and I had booked up. The bus times allow some 6 hours in Blair Atholl, which results in a rather long lunch unless some walking is undertaken, so I went equipped with map, compass, walking boots, poles and rucksack, hoping that my knee had recovered sufficiently from a recent skiing injury, to climb a modest hill.

The bus duly arrived at 11:30, enabling an initial march up the road to Wasted Degrees. There I met brothers Conall & Jack Low for a quick brewery tour, and was lucky to see their new can line in full operation. Sadly, being on foot, I was

unable to stock up on bottles if I was going to climb a hill. Back in the village, the Bothy Bar had just opened at the Atholl Arms Hotel, I was initially disappointed to see just the one handpull pouring, but before I was half way through my Ale of Atholl, it had been joined by the other 3 real ales, all freshly pulled through.

I was lucky enough to catch the owner Heather Reeves to discuss CAMRA stuff, including a survey the Hotel's details to keep WhatPub up to date. Just time to try the Light Ale before my walk; at 3.7% ABV this is the ale we maybe tend to pass by, yet as I had been reading from Moulin's website on the journey up the A9, it is based on the original Boddington's recipe, and certainly showed a likeness – definitely refreshing for lunchtime.

Munro's were not on the cards for hillwalking that day – for one thing my time schedule would never allow. I set off across a footbridge over the river Garry, heading for something a bit nearer; up through some pleasant woodland, I found myself crossing rough moorland (at least it was dry underfoot), to finally reach the top of Tulach Hill, just as the sun was starting to burst through the clouds. For early June, I suddenly found it unbelievable hot, and was thankful that the forecast of all-day sunshine had been inaccurate. Tulach is classed as a "hump" (hundred metre prominence), one of those hills with only distant views, and no defined summit, except for the trig point, to complete my "survey day". Descending by a slightly longer route, I was aware of becoming rather thirsty again, without a great deal of time to kill. Despite my knee complaining, I upped the pace and made it back to the Bothy Bar with my tongue hanging out.



The Braveheart went down without touching the sides of my throat; just a half of Old Remedial was enough to confirm that medicinal flavour it is famous for. Chatting to the head barman, I said I remembered him from previous visits – from Latvia, his name is Gvido and he has been pouring Moulin ales there for 13 years. Still hot and thirsty, I just had time for another Light Ale outside in a sunny corner of the hotel garden, and a quick chat with a holidaying real ale fanatic from down South, before dashing for my bus home. I remembered to beerscore in WhatPub – each beer, and a good one for the Atholl Arms overall – 5 scores in total.

What a wonderful day out! I shall do that again soon – why don't you too?

By Richard Barnes (above)

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