

Diary Dates

Friday 17th March: **Branch Meeting:** Dairyman's Daughter, Arreton. 8pm
Saturday 18th March: **Wessex Regional Meeting & Winchester Beer Festival.**
Saturday 25th March: **Errol Linton Blues Vibe Quay Arts** from 7.30pm
Friday 7th - Sunday 9th April: **CAMRA Members Weekend & CAMRA National AGM** Bournemouth. (Volunteers needed for staffing www.camraagm.org.uk)
Wednesday 19th April **Pub & Beer Awards**, King Harry's Bar 7pm
Friday 21st April **Meeting & Brading Walk About - start Wheatsheaf** 8pm
Friday 28th April, - Monday 1st May: **Beer Festival** - Havenstreet Station (see page 9)
Saturday 13th May: **Wolverton Blues & Folk Fair** Wolverton Manor
Friday 19th May **Branch Meeting** British Legion Club, Ventnor 8pm
Sat & Sun 20th, 21st May **Rydeabus Running Weekend** - IW Bus Museum
Friday 16th June **Branch Meeting**, Castle Inn, Sandown 8pm
7th to 9th July **Highdown Beer Festival** Totland
Friday 21st July **Branch Meeting** New Inn, Shalfleet 8pm

www.wightwash.org.uk

Wightwash is produced with the support of our valued sponsors

ISLE OF WIGHT
DISTILLERY
TRUE ISLAND SPIRIT



www.goddardsbrewery.com



www.yates-brewery.co.uk



www.islandbrewery.co.uk

The views expressed in Wightwash are not necessarily those of the editor or CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) either nationally or locally.

Wightwash can be contacted by phone 721557 or email editor@wightwash.org.uk

Wightwash

Volume 2, Number 71

Spring Issue 2017



The Campaign for Real Ale exists to preserve and promote good beer and pubs.



Character Inns add the Crown to their portfolio



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

In this FREE issue:

Pub & Brewery News Brewery Fire Brigades
Pub Walk ICELAND PRIZE QUIZ

Historic Walk Clubs Island Landmarks

and much, much more...

A Campaign of Two Halves

Fair on dea tax beer I now

Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to the: Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Address _____

 Postcode _____
 Email address _____
 Tel No(s) _____

Direct Debit Non DD
 Single Membership £24 (UK & EU) £26
 Joint Membership £29.50£31.50 (Partner at the same address)
 For Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____
 Signed _____ Date _____
 Applications will be processed within 21 days

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Email address (if different from main member) _____ 01/15

Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

Join CAMRA today – www.camra.org.uk/joinus

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to: Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW. Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager Bank or Building Society 9 26 1 2 9

Address _____

 Postcode _____

Name(s) of Account Holder _____

 Bank or Building Society Account Number _____

 Branch Sort Code _____

 Reference _____

FOR CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY
 This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number _____
 Name _____
 Postcode _____

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) _____
 Date _____

The Direct Debit Guarantee

This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer

This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits

If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request

If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.

- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to

You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

Win a £20 Meal Voucher for the **Wight Mouse Inn** or a case of Yates' Ales

Just answer these easy questions. The first two correct answers out of the hat on 1st May win the prizes.

Send answers to - The Editor, Wightwash, Oakdene, Rookley, Ventnor, PO38 3NH or email - editor@wightwash.org.uk

- 1/ Which Isle of Wight town is twinned with *Tonnay-Charente*?
- 2/ What do *Anthony Goddard*, *Alan Titchmarsh*, and *Robin Courage* have in common?
- 3/ Which ex-Ventnor cricketer has just broken the record for an Australian ODI opening partnership?
- 4/ On which London Underground line would you find *Marble Arch*?
- 5/ From which musical does the song *Food, Glorious Food* come from?
- 6/ What was the former name of *Sri Lanka*?
- 7/ *Rothsay* is the principle town on which Scottish island?
- 8/ Who is the current (March 2017) Home Secretary?
- 9/ and 10/ Identify these European countries from their flags.



9

10



Answers to the Autumn Quiz

- 1/ Macintosh
- 2/ Oscar Wilde
- 3/ Bobtail
- 4/ Daddy Longlegs
- 5/ Merchant of Venice
- 6/ Elvis Costello
- 7/ Dorset
- 8/ United Kingdom Independence Party
- 9/ Piglet (from Winnie the Pooh)
- 10/ Boo Boo (from Yogi Bear)

Roger Corbett from London wins a meal voucher and Steve Lang-Jones from Whitwell wins a case of Yates' beer.

Thank you to all the others who took part - better luck next time!

The **WIGHT MOUSE INN**

Andy & Cheryl welcome you to their family run 17th century coaching inn situated in the idyllic village of Chale on the island's most southerly point, with spectacular views to The Needles and beyond.

- Live music twice a week
- Food served all day
- Outdoor childrens' play area
- En-suite bedrooms
- Large sunny garden
- Large car park

Church Place, Chale, IW, PO38 2HA
 01983 730431 info@wightmouse.com www.wightmouse.co.uk

The Tennyson Memorial

This striking memorial which stands on Highdown, near Freshwater was erected by public subscription in 1897 to commemorate the life of Alfred Lord Tennyson who lived in Freshwater for 39 years.

Tennyson was the son of the rector of Somersby in Lincolnshire and his early life was spent here. His talent as a poet became obvious when as a student at Cambridge some of his early work was published.

National acclaim followed later memorable poems and he was appointed Poet Laureate in 1850. He was favoured by Queen Victoria who personally offered him his peerage and Prince Albert came to see him.



He moved to the Island in 1853 when he bought Farringford House. Here he was photographed by his friend and close neighbour Julia Margaret Cameron.

He was visited at Freshwater by the great and famous but he craved personal privacy and sometimes sought it elsewhere. National mourning followed his death in 1892 and he was buried with fitting ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

Rob Marshall

Pub of the Year

- 1/ King Harry's Bar, Shanklin
- 2/ Fowler & Co, Ryde
- 3/ Newport Ale House
- 4/ Traveller's Joy, Northwood
- 5/ Union Inn, Cowes
- 6/ Cowes Ale House
- 7/ Castle Inn, Sandown
- 8/ Waverley Park
- 8/ White Horse, Whitwell
- 10/ High Park Tavern, Ryde
- 10/ Volunteer, Ventnor

Beer of the Year

- 1/ Earl's RDA, Island Brewery
- 2/ Fuggle-Dee-Dum, Goddards
- 3/ Wight Christmas, Island Brewery
- 4/ Yachtsman's Ale, Island Brewery
- 5/ Ale of Wight, Goddards
- 6/ Dark Side of the Wight, Yates'
- 7/ White Gold, Island Brewery
- 8/ Ducks Folly, Goddards
- 9/ Wight Squirrel, Goddards,
- 10/ On the Buses, Yates'

Congratulation to Island Brewery and King Harry's Bar in what, at first sight, looks almost like a duplicate of last year's results. However, on closer inspection there are some subtle changes; both Ale Houses have fared particularly well this year; and a warm welcome to the **High Park Tavern** and the **White Horse** to our top ten. Thanks go out to Mike Hoar who meticulously organised the poll and thank you to all the members that voted. And for those that would like to vote next year - see opposite!

For the full results please see our website - www.wightwash.org.uk

Who's Who

Chairman and BeerPoint coordinator

John Nicholson
jinl@johnnicholson.co.uk

Secretary

Alec Lawson
alec.lawson@virgin.net

Treasurer and GBG coordinator

Ken (Buzzy) Matthews
camraiw@aol.com

Wightwash Editor and Membership

Tim Marshall
editor@wightwash.org.uk

Press Officer

Brian Jacobs
jcloth14@gmail.com

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER WIGHTWASH WILL BE 20TH MAY 2017

Our number one pub!

Branch Pub of the Year 2016

King Harry's Bar
Old Village, Shanklin

Ever changing variety of well kept real ales

Telephone: 01983 863119

Function room available for all occasions

Live bands every Friday from 9pm 'til 11pm

20p off a pint of real ale for card carrying CAMRA members



Goddards Brewery

Goddards Brewery will be launching *Starboard!*, a 4% golden session ale in March. It's brewed to a new recipe that combines English hops with Pale Ale and Cara malt to deliver a distinctive orangey flavour with a citrus aroma and a powerful hoppy aroma and finish.

Xavier Baker, managing director of Goddards, says "Balance is the key with a beer like *Starboard!* We had a good idea of the overall taste and what we wanted to achieve with the new recipe; aroma, body, mouthfeel, colour and strength. Within the different styles of ales, the 4% golden ale (known as a session beer) category is the biggest volume. We wanted to create a brand new exciting recipe to add to our classic range of ales. Using our experience we can bring all of these together harmoniously."

Starboard takes advantage of the popular



golden ale market, and its name reflects the Isle of Wight's maritime associations.

The pump clip features a starboard marker buoy with a flashing green light so people will 'see this beer coming'. And it will be coming to a pub near you from March.

Starboard joins Goddards other blonde/gold beers, *Ale of Wight*, and *Inspiration*. It will replace the darker *Scrumdiggity*, nee GSB, which was the first beer they

brewed, and it will be sad to see it disappear; however, Goddards do have a good portfolio, with the amber market catered for by *Wight Squirrel* and *Fuggle-dee-dum*, and the burgeoning IPA sector covered by the excellent *Ducks Folly*. Dark beer lovers were briefly able to enjoy the *Mocha Stout*, so how about a porter, Xav?!

Goddards have had a successful run with *Ducks Folly* through their national guest slot with JD Wetherspoon, and they've been asked to do another brew for them. *Fuggle-Dee-Dum* is on Punch Taverns Finest Cask Rotation from March to May.

Brian Jacobs - Goddards BLO

Welcome to Northwood's Traditional pub

- Family Friendly
- Garden
- Kids' Play Area
- 5 Real Ales
- Wednesday Pie Night £5
- Dog Friendly



85 Pallance Road
Northwood
PO31 8LS
karnagestocker38@icloud.com
(01983) 298024

BeerPoint was devised to identify those establishments that consistently serve Real Ale to the highest standards.

Being awarded **BeerPoint** status is a strong recommendation from IW CAMRA, that the listed pub is one that you can rely upon to get a good pint of Real Ale. The definition of a good pint means that the beer must fulfil **three** basic criteria:

1. The beer must have condition, which means it must have natural carbonation from undergoing a secondary fermentation in the cask - that tingle on the tongue. It also means that the beer must be fresh as by definition stale beer loses its carbonation and goes flat.
2. The beer must be kept and served within the CAMRA acceptable temperature range. Too cold, and some yeasts coagulate and taint the flavour (peppery, for instance), too warm and the beer can taint with off flavours (marzipan and others). Also, the mouthfeel of the beer changes above 13 degrees and it becomes significantly more difficult and less pleasant to swallow. CAMRA ideal is around 11° or 12°C.
3. The pint must be clear. This is very important for a pulled pint, as haziness or cloudiness can be an indicator of dirty lines and thereby contamination. There is nothing wrong with un-fined beer, and there is a trend for this amongst progressive craft beers, but the taste and effect of fresh yeast is quite different to that of dirty pips.

Only pubs that serve beer that satisfies **all** these three criteria will be listed, and if and when they cease to satisfy **any** of the three (for example, too warm or too cold), they will be suspended with the reasons passed on to the pub by the administrator.

BeerPoint listed pubs that are known currently to satisfy the criteria are, by area:

North - Cowes & District

Anchor Inn, Cowes Ale House, Duke Of York, Folly Inn, Fountain Inn, Kingston Arms, Lifeboat, Pier View, Portland Inn, Sportsman's Rest, Traveller's Joy, Union Inn, Vectis Tavern, Waverley Park, White Hart - East Cowes, Woodvale, Yachtsman

Central - Newport & District

Bargeman's Rest, Blacksmith's Arms, Castle Inn, Chequers Inn, Crispin, Dairyman's Daughter, Fighting Cocks, George Inn, Griffin, Man In The Moon, Medina Quay, Newport Ale House, Pointer Inn, Prince Of Wales, Taverners, Waverley, Wheatsheaf, White Lion, Wren's Nest

East - Ryde & District

Boat House, Castle, Cedars, Crown Hotel, Culver Haven, Esplanade Bars, Fishbourne Inn, Fleming Arms, Fowlers, High Park Tavern, King Lud, Kynge's Well, Old Village Inn, Pilot Boat, Railway, Ryde Castle Hotel, Seaview Hotel, Simeon Arms, Solent Inn, Vine Inn, Wheatsheaf - Brading, Woodman's Arms, Yarbridge, Yelf's Hotel

South - Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor & District

Buddle Inn, Castle, Chine Inn, Crab & Lobster Tap, Falcon, Fishermans Cottage, Flanagans, King Harry's Bar, Old Comical, Perks Of Ventnor, Plough & Barleycorn, Spyglass, Star Inn, Village Inn, Waterfront, White Horse, Wight Mouse.

West - Yarmouth, Freshwater, Calbourne, Shorwell & District

Bugle Hotel, Crown Inn, Highdown Inn, Horse & Groom, King's Head, New Inn, Red Lion, Sun Inn (Hulverstone), Sun (Calbourne), Three Bishops, Vine Inn, Waterfront, Wheatsheaf.

PLEASE NOTE: The absence of a pub's name in this list may not necessarily indicate that their beer is not up to the required CAMRA standard. Members, please contact the **BeerPoint** administrator if you know of a pub that you think should be included or reviewed.

BeerPoint is currently administered by our chairman John Nicholson who can be contacted on jinl@johnnicholson.co.uk

probably prompted by the major fire at the paper mill in 1813. The connection with the beer industry was that a percentage of the paper was used by brewers for their labels. In fact the first recorded meeting of the Mitchells & Butlers Cape Hill and John Dickinson Fire Brigades took place in 1898 when they both attended the first ever National Fire Brigade Union Camp and Tournament at Blenheim Park, Woodstock; home of the Duke of Marlborough the then president of the NFBU! So the next time we drink a pint let's remember those brave firemen who have faced adversity through the years.

In the next issue we'll take a closer look at the Birmingham institution of **Mitchells and Butlers**.

Paul Sheldon



THE KINGS HEAD
YARMOUTH



Home cooked food,
selection of specials and
Sunday carvery
Booking advisable

Quay Street, Yarmouth,
IW PO41 0PB 760177





- Daily Specials Board
- Local Ales
- Fine Wines
- Outside catering also available

THE WHEATSHEAF INN
Tel: 01983 760456
Bridge Road, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, PO41 0PH

Yates' Brewery

Yates' are proud to announce a new beer *Yates Islander* 4.0%. An easy drinking Isle of Wight amber coloured ale, brewed with



Goldings & Chinook hops to give a full bodied taste. Sales and feedback have been brilliant. It will soon be available on the Island and in the Dorset area.

The brewery will be in for a busy few months with beer contracts coming up with HT Whites who cover the south coast and the national Wadworth estate.

Sales were high during the Christmas period and *Santa's Ale* completely sold

out, which, incidentally won first prize from the Labologist's Society in their Commemorative Label category.

Yule be Sorry got a creditable fourth in London's Pigs Ear Beer Festival.

Yates' are pleased to see Niton Post Office open and are delighted with the cask trade they have received from this.

They shall continue to supply ales from the Dartmoor Brewery for the coming season.

Yates' recently produced bottled beers for AJ Wells: *Slow Burner* and *Old Flame* which are shipped internationally and also a large batch of *Black Garlic Beer* for the Garlic Farm who are proving to be as busy as ever with their bottle sales.

Lorraine Daish - BLO Yates' Brewery






THE LIFEBOAT
EAST COWES

BAR - RESTAURANT - TERRACE

ONE OF THE ISLAND'S BEST KEPT SECRETS

WONDERFUL VIEWS OVERLOOKING THE WATER
FROM OUR WEST FACING TERRACE

NON STOP FOOD AND DRINK SERVED
FROM MIDDAY TO 9.30PM

RALLIES AND REGATTAS WELCOME

BRITANNIA WAY, EAST COWES, PO32 6UB
01983 292711
www.thelifeboatcoves.co.uk

Island Brewery

This year will mark the 7th year since the foundation of Island Brewery with a move to the new brewery yard at Myrtle Cottage, Newport Road, Northwood. This was the site of the old Malt and Hops pub and brewhouse (pre-1841), which makes it an especially fitting site restoring its 176+ yr old history. It could make a very interesting brewery history walk of Northwood, with the old Flower Pot just up the road, the still active 300yr old Horseshoe and the 250+ yr Traveller's Joy that served the former Tinkers Lane (now Pallance Road) community. In those days the bridge at the bottom was no more than a ford, and evidence shows, there was a family who had established a dwelling roofed with an upturned boat in a location now sited in the double hedge row below Comforts Farm Lane.

Head Brewer (now *Consultant Brewer*), Chris Coleman, has been producing a series of fusion craft beers, in small batch (2 pins or a firkin), and has brewed some old Mews recipes for Paul Armfield's valiant recent celebration of the Mew's Brewery at the Quay Arts Centre.

Reviewing opportunities that the Beer and Buses Festival has opened up, Steve Minshull has said; "Building on the popular success of our festival special, *Hop Aboard*, we are considering producing a wider range of specials for this year, to meet the demand of increasingly discerning ale drinkers. We recognise that people see this event as something special, and festival goers would appreciate



THE ANCHOR COWES




BAR - RESTAURANT - ROOMS - MUSIC

AT THE HEART OF THE COWES YACHTING SCENE

THE ISLAND'S BEST LIVE MUSIC VENUE

GREAT FOOD SERVED ALL DAY

CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2014/2015

EN SUITE ACCOMMODATION

1-3 HIGH STREET, COWES, PO31 7SA
01983 292823
www.theanchorcowes.co.uk

pulling it together. In California there was an accident in 2004 at the Riverside Brewing Company where an employee sustained second degree burns cleaning an unpurged keg with boiling water. So even today accidents can happen but in the early stages of the brewing industry things were slightly more precarious... Let's go back in time to where we started with the Mitchells and Butlers Cape Hill and John Dickinson Fire Brigades.

Dianne and David invite you to their

Palace of Smiles

The Crab and Lobster Tap

Grove Road, Ventnor. Tel 852311

Real Ale Live Music

Good Fresh Local Food

find us on facebook

Mitchells and Butlers formed their Fire Brigade at Cape Hill Brewery, Smethwick in 1882. Cape Hill Fire Brigade were instrumental in founding the Midland Fire Brigade Association, which in 1887 was expanded to become the National Fire Brigade Union and changed in 1919 to become the National Fire Brigades Association (NFBA).

In fact, in their heyday Brewery Fire Brigades and their like were frequently the first at the scene of any local fire. This included fire brigades at other establishments like the John Dickinson Paper company who founded their brigade at Hemel Hempstead in 1883 with acquisition of a Merryweather steam fire engine;



CHINE INN

A range of well kept and well chosen real ales

Delicious, home cooked food with wonderful views of Shanklin's beaches & The Chine

Open 4pm - 11pm Tues - Fri (Closed Mondays)
 Sat 12 noon - 11pm Sun 12 noon - 10.30pm

Please see our website www.chineinn.co.uk for details of events and entertainment.

SHANKLIN

01983 865880 or 07790 663527





by falling debris and one the following day from alcohol poisoning. More recently, the RCH Brewery in Weston-Super-Mare caught fire in January 2016. The fire was traced to a faulty fusebox. Needless to say, the brewhouse underwent extensive repair and refurbishment, with the Health and Safety executives recommendations ringing in their ears!

Let's face it, the notion of breweries even in these modern times as potentially dangerous places to work isn't necessarily something that would occur to many people outside the industry. Breweries are manufacturers and people working in these facilities are dealing with difficult and dangerous equipment. In America we had the Redhook Brewery explosion in 2012 when a brewery worker was killed pumping compressed air into a plastic keg to clean it. The keg exploded. This is a rare experience in terms of a tank actually blowing in comparison with tanks actually crumbling or shrinking in size from the pressures



RINGWOOD BREWERY

Come and visit the Ringwood Brewery Shop
(Open: Monday - Saturday 9.30-5pm)

Tours are also available, booking compulsory.
Call our Brewery Store on 01425 470303

138 Christchurch Rd, Ringwood BH24 3AP
WWW.RINGWOODBREWERY.CO.UK

VISIT THE WINDING DOWNS

a range of special beers produced for the event, distributed on a beer trail, along with all our other regular beers. It then helps makes the event extra-special and all we are doing is filling the modern demand and expectation, in the rise of the craft beer wave, that is sweeping the beer drinking world right now."

As BLO and branch Chairman, I welcome such initiative shown by Chris and Island Brewery, because, as to date, apart from Wetherspoons, no one has grasped the opportunity that lies in facilitating the craft beer revolution. On the Island, even some freehouses, continue to struggle selling the same old beers that you can get at any pub, instead of taking advantage of the unique and golden business opportunity that craft beers present especially as we have Island Brewery on the doorstep prepared to brew any beer to any recipe you like. If it was down to me, I would be ordering

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)


If portable electrical appliances are used by you, your customers, your guests or your staff then you need to protect yourself and the public. It may even be a requirement of your insurance. Have your appliances tested by **West Wight Audio**. Call for a no-obligation quote. 01983 754666. All Island coverage.

something like that Belgian gose style beer that Dancing Man Brewery produce—Screw Face Sour; whew, and it does just what it says in the name, lovely!

John Nicholson -BLO Island Brewery

CAMRA DISCOUNTS

Here is a list of pubs which offer card carrying CAMRA members discount.

- Old Village Inn, Bembridge - 10%
- Pilot Boat, Bembridge - 15%
- Union, Cowes £3.90 all real ales for locals and CAMRA members
- Anchor, Cowes - 10%
- Duke of York, Cowes - 20p off a pint
- High Park Tavern, Ryde - 25p off a pint
- King Harry's Bar, Shanklin - 20p off a pint
- FREQUENT FLYERS 
- Did you know that your CAMRA vouchers are valid at JD Wetherspoons pubs at airports?

Landlords, if you offer discount to card carrying CAMRA members, please inform editor@wightwash.org.uk

The oldest pub in Sandown

THE OLD COMICAL
Est. 1857

Good ale, good music, good company.

LIVE MUSIC	DOUBLE-UP FOR £1 ON ALL
OPEN FROM 10AM EVERY DAY	BRANDED SPIRITS
FAMILY GARDEN	REAL ALES
FREE WI-FI	LARGE SELECTION OF CIDERS
OVER 18'S FRONT BAR	POOL/DARTS/PETANQUE
LARGE PUBLIC CAR PARK	DOGS WELCOME

15 St John's Road, Sandown PO36 8ES
TEL: 403848 www.facebook.com/TheOldComical

Apart from one notable exception it's not been too bad a winter for Island pubs.

The exception of course was the closing of the **Volunteer** in Ventnor. David Hampton of **Victoria Inns** said they have decided against installing a manager and are looking to sell the freehold. **Gully-Howard** are handling the sale and any enquiries should go to Gavin or Jane in their Ventnor office (01983 301434).

Two bits of heartening news were the reopening of the **Sportsman's Rest** in Porchfield (see our Winter issue) and the **Railway** in Ryde. After a year of jumping through legal hoops, Greg Hailes and his partner Hayley reopened the Railway in January. They have now built the trade up to warrant six hand-pumps. Greg says that the pub has a changing and varied selection of real ales and tries always to include a



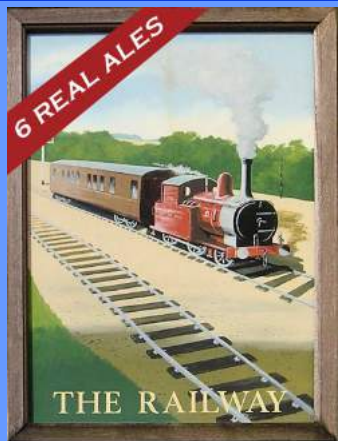
dark ale and a couple of locals. He also points out that both the Railway and his other pub, The Wheatsheaf, Brading have bus stops right outside; and course they're not far from the railway either.

Richard Adams has taken over from Jamie Clarke at the **Simeon Arms** (see page 18).

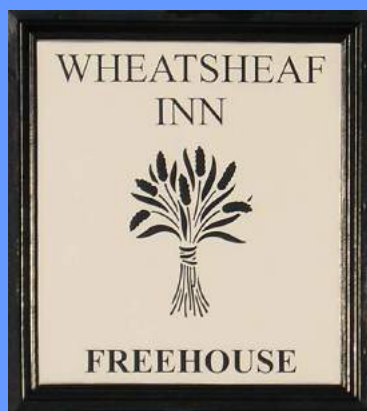
After a brief closure it's good to note that the **Fleming Arms**, Binstead has now reopened under the joint stewardship of Michelle Moody and Ros Low.

Greg and Hayley welcome you to The Railway Inn, Ryde and The Wheatsheaf, Brading

Freehouses with Real Ale at popular prices : Live Music : Sky & BT Sports TV



Tel: 611500 | PO33 2RT



Tel: 400747 | PO36 0DQ

The Railway & The Wheatsheaf are family & dog friendly pubs and are easily accessible by train & bus (No. 3) Live Music @ The Railway - Fri 9pm & Sun 6pm | Live Music @ The Wheatsheaf - Saturdays 9pm

another one with its own firefighting team. In 1876 it obtained the town's first steam fire engine, attending most of the fires in the town at that time. (In 1923 Sedgwick sold its brewery and tied estate to local competitor, Benskins.)

The co-ordinated National Fire Service was not introduced until 1938 by which time there were between 1,400 and 1,500 municipal fire brigades in the UK run by local councils, with many of these supplemented by the breweries like the Cape Hill Fire Brigade which attended the Smethwick Theatre Royal fire in 1929 amongst others. In this tragic incident, where eleven people lost their lives, the local fire brigade proved totally inadequate and, had it not been for the intervention of the far more professional brewery fire brigade, the results could have been far worse.

Brewers themselves were not immune from such tragedies. In 1901 the Phipps Towcester Brewery in Northamptonshire was destroyed by fire. Prior to that, The Horse Shoe Brewery (owned by Henry Meux and Co.) in Tottenham Court Road was the source of the 1814 London Beer Flood when a huge vat within the brewery failed, resulting in over 323,000 imperial gallons of porter spilling into the surrounding streets. Nine people died, eight of by drowning or being struck

The Highdown Inn

Bed & Breakfast, Local Seafood Restaurant and Country Family Pub



Dog Friendly, Family Friendly, Walker Friendly "Muddy boots welcome!"

Constantly Changing Cask Ales

Coming Up: Beer Festival - 7th to 9th July

Telephone: 01983 752450

Highdown Lane, Totland, Isle of Wight, PO39 OHY

www.highdowninn.co.uk

This article all started when I came across an old but beautifully preserved Leyland fire engine from the Mitchells & Butlers Cape Hill Brewery just by our house in Ryde. It displayed a rather curious 'Deers Leap' registered trademark depicting a deer leaping in a semi-wooded area on the side. The hood mascot also had the same deer in glorious golden brass standing high and proud. The engine had come down from Birmingham to attend the Havenstreet Steam Fair and was having a run out to the sea front. I was intrigued why any brewery would have a fire brigade...



Read on and all will be explained!

Due to the high risk of fires, it was common for breweries such as Ind Coope, Samuel Allsopp and Bass to have their own fire brigades. For example in 1944 the Ind Coope Fire Service was fully manned for both fire and ambulance duties.



These were made available for the local authority as well as supporting the Burton Borough Units. In fact these breweries had fire engines well before the Burton Borough.



One of the biggest problems was burning hops as dry hops will absorb eight times their weight in water. The amount of water pumped in had to be restricted otherwise the expanding hops could actually demolish walls. The firemen were used for other duties within the brewery, like shunting the eight wheel tankers around or working with the horses.

Sedgwicks Brewery (est.1655) in Watford was

Niton News: Matt Parker has taken on the lease of the ~~White Lion~~ (sorry, **Niton Arms**) and **Joe's Place**, the pub in the post-office continues to prove popular.

Rookley News: **The Pop Inn** celebrated its first birthday by returning to Glencoe Cottage.

Character Inns have added the **Crown**, **Shorwell** and the **Crab & Lobster**, **Bembridge** to their portfolio.

New Inn, **Shalfleet** has been taken over by former manager, Daniel Witherwich.

Rob and Rachel Burrows will be taking over the **Blacksmith's Arms** but will continue to run the **Pointer Inn**, **Newchurch**.

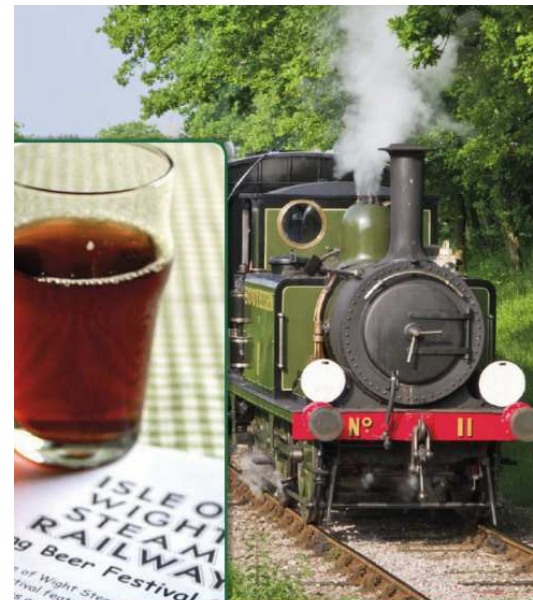
Isle of Wight Steam Railway STOP-PRESS

An extra evening's entertainment has been added to the event advertised below. Jeff Ledicott will be running a quiz on the evening of Friday 28th. Phone the railway on 882204 for more details

Perks of Ventnor
 46 High Street
 Ventnor
 Tel: 01983 857446
 Mobile: 07731489692
 www.perksofventnor.com

Surround yourself with nostalgia and enjoy our fine home cooked food. We stock an excellent range of Wines, Beers, Lagers, Ciders and Non-Alcoholic drinks. Guest Bottled Ales and Organic Ciders

Very Definitely a Traditional British Lounge and Wine Bar



ISLE OF WIGHT STEAM RAILWAY

12th ANNUAL REAL ALE FESTIVAL
29th, 30th April & 1st May

Enjoy a pint of your favourite tipple from a selection of beers sourced from across the country, including some local brews.

FREE admission to the Festival.
11am - 7pm Saturday & Sunday
11am - 5pm Bank Holiday Monday

The Railway Station,
Havenstreet, PO33 4DS

01983 882204
iwsteamrailway.co.uk

Historic (Beer) Walk of Cowes

An idea formed over a pint in the Ale House, whilst reviewing the successes of the Beer & Buses festival, last October; Jeff Sechiari and John Nicholson, chairmen of the Brewery History Society and Isle of Wight CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale), respectively, set about organising the first in a planned series of history walks around the Island's towns, focused towards the pub and brewing heritage, much of which has been lost over the years.

We joined forces with Dave Jones, of Cowes Heritage, and the author of acclaimed book, *The Pubs of Cowes, Gurnard & Northwood*, and chose our route to work on - from the Kingston Arms to the Union Inn. It soon became clear that our walk was to encompass far more than the history of just pubs and breweries; it would be a walk through the social history of Cowes, as it rose to become a significant seaport town, no less, marked by, and reflected in, the establishment of its pubs and breweries.

Around 40 people joined us for the inaugural walk on 11th February; local people and seasoned history trail walkers from London, Sussex, Winchester and Southampton. The prescribed route took us from the beautiful Mews stained glass, inside the Kingston, directly to the Dry Dock off Arctic Road, one of the largest of its type in its day, then along to the site of Mill Hill Road Station and the tunnel, down to the Floating Bridge, The Bell, Ratsey's and JS Whites, then up to the Duke of York where Barry Cass proceeded to captivate the crowd with his tales as a landlord, the youngest in the Country, when he started, and the mischievous prank that he used to play in sending unsuspecting visitors down the



Tunnel to East Cowes (the former gents underground toilets, in the road outside).

Outside the Duke of York, we viewed the former site of Blake's Medina Brewery, then walked down passed the spectacular Jolliffe's building and up St Marys Road where we were joined by our MP, Andrew Turner, fresh from canvassing, and we told, by Spencer's own



below 5%, 5.4% appears to be the mean, and an astonishing amount is above 10%. Moreover, it can cost as little (!) as around £5 for 500ml. Still pricey, but it doesn't seem to square with the Icelandic nanny state. How many pubs and off-licenses in the UK will supply beer that strong? There again, the Winter nights are as long and depressing in Iceland as an evening at Yates (no, not you Dave). However, the Icelanders fill the long lonely hours with all-night pub crawls, *runters* (as long as they have an understanding bank manager), will party until the wee, small ones, and will drink in cars and on pavements, rather like Ryde on a Friday.



So, Iceland is a mixed bag. There's no arguing with the quality and variety of food - where else could you buy puffin? - or the beer, and the scenery is stunning. But the price tag is a massive deterrent, and there's no way of avoiding it unless you know someone with plenty of money who owes you a big favour.



Brian Jacobs

THE CASTLE INN

FITZROY STREET, SANDOWN
ISLE OF WIGHT PO36 8HY
01983 403169
www.sandowncastle.co.uk

A Right Proper Pub!



A traditional pub, well known for it's real ales and community spirit, popular with locals and visitors alike.

Canterbury is a churchman. A slice of choccy cake in a corner café will cost you the greater part of £10, a meal out for two will deplete your bank balance by around £100, and a 33cl bottle of craft beer can be a thirst-quenching £12 or more (though UK pubs aren't far behind – I know an Oxford craft bar which charges around £9 for a 33cl bottle of Belgian beer). Think about that; you could buy three pints in Wetherspoons for the price of a small bottle of craft beer in Reykjavik, and still get change. And you pay for everything; there are no free lunches in Iceland. I did stop to admire an impressive view across the harbour, but swiftly moved on when a man with a leather money bag came into view.

After a while we decided the best policy was to stop whining and bite the bullet, in the hope it wouldn't dislodge a filling, like the one in our wallets. Even so, that first round in the Microbar came hard and fast - it set us back £40 for around 4 pints. We subsequently learned this was on the good side of extortion. Online guides will tell you that a 33cl bottle of beer in Iceland will cost you around a fiver. Bumfodder. It might be true of low-strength local lager, but it isn't true of craft beer, even the local ones. To some extent, it's a legacy problem - the Icelandic authorities are still very uneasy about alcohol, like the rest of the Nordic world. Believe it or not,

beer was actually illegal in Iceland until 1989 (though, bizarrely, you could have had a bender on wine, whiskey or gin – the temperance movement managed to convince the Icelandic authorities that making beer available to the great unwashed would lead to the destruction of society), and it's still tightly controlled. The strongest beer you can buy in a supermarket is 2.5%, and you must go to a state-registered liquor shop (Vinbuden), of which are around a dozen in and around Reykjavik, to buy anything stronger. And here's the paradox; when you get to one, there's very little beer

clear brew
The Beer Line Cleaning Professionals

Established since 2006
Serving over 1000 establishments nationwide

Professionally maintaining keg and cask lines since 2006

- ENHANCE** your reputation for taste & quality of your draught beers
- SAVE** money on cleaning & maintenance
- INCREASE** profits & sales
- FREE** up valuable time
- USE** of a professional service that pays for itself
- CLAIM** all of your ullage back in tax
- INCREASE YOUR GREEN CREDENTIALS** by decreasing CO2, water and chemicals
- CONSISTENT PRODUCT QUALITY** You remain in control! You take no risks!
- FINANCIAL BENEFITS** - 60% saving on waste; you will not be throwing your stock down the drain
- ADDITIONAL SAVINGS** on gas, chemicals and water

Free initial clean
No commitment
No contract

Get in contact today for your **FREE** first clean
Tel: 0800 7810577 Email: enquiries@clearbrew.co.uk

www.clearbrew.co.uk

Many of our customers are featured in the 2017 Good Beer Guide

veteran, Ken Matthews, of the surprising links between the former Mayflower brewery and pub and the Spencer Rigging building. Then, carefully, back up passed the perilous Thrunge to view the sites around the old Cowes Railway Station and the ghost writing on the wall of the former Wheatsheaf, doubling back, passed more historic sites, to the Anchor, to be met by Chris Troup, for an absorbing talk on his life in the brewing industry, whilst we lunched amongst the displays set up in the Stable Bar.

The Village Inn
Shanklin Old Village
Open lunchtimes and evenings
for lunches, snacks, evening meals and REAL ALE
Good Food, Fine Wine and Fine Ale. Tel: 862514

Check our Specials Board

Live Entertainment

The last leg of the excursion continued along the High Street, with its many former pubs, and John Eames Brewery, until we reached the Royal Yacht Squadron, where we were greeted by the Flag Officer, Peter Scott, for a special tour around and some interesting stories in the history of the building and its uses.



Finally, it was time to head back to the Union to warm up and reflect on a fascinating day. Many then adjourned to the Island Sailing Club who had invited us in for a visit to round the day off, or, the Ale house and other pubs in the town.

The DUKE of YORK INN
Mill Hill Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7BT
Tel. 01983 295171
www.dukeofyorkcowes.co.uk

Special Offer for CAMRA Members
20p off per Pint on REAL ALES
on production of Membership Card

Great Value Accommodation
All Rooms en-suite
Serving Full English Breakfast through to Evening Meals
Large Crews & Families Welcome

Isle of Wight CAMRA rugby shirts, sweatshirts and polo shirts are available in a variety of sizes and colours.



For sizes up to XXL:
 Polo shirts £15,
 Sweatshirts £16,
 Rugby shirts £21
 Larger sizes are available
 (add £1). Post and
 packaging £3.50.
 Please phone Pete Cobb
 (01983) 298851 for more
 details and orders.

Sky Blue	Royal Blue	Navy Blue	Deep Navy	Kelly Green
Burgundy	Heather Grey	Purple	Emerald	Bottle Green
Sunflower	Orange	Red	Khaki	Black

Due to the vagaries of the printing process, this chart is for indication only.

WADWORTH
 BREWED IN WILTSHIRE SINCE 1875

OLD COOL IS THE NEW COOL

HARD CRAFT SINCE 1875

www.wadworth.co.uk @wadworth

have a Beer Day), and bars like the Microbar and the Skuli Bar offer around a dozen draught crafts, and an impressive bottle bank. Whereas in a UK pub you'll struggle to find anything other than low-strength bitters, supplemented by the odd IPA, dark beer (usually called 'porter', even if it's clearly a mild or old ale), or red ale, in Iceland there is a cornucopia of delights awaiting you. Mostly, you'll find home grown craft beers, though you will find imported bottles – as a general rule, if you can't understand the label, it's local.



There are two main Icelandic Breweries, Egils and Víking, who operate 'experimental' departments, respectively Borg and Einstök (which you can buy in UK supermarkets). In addition, there are 5 micros and 3 brewpubs scattered throughout the country. Our first assault on the local brews was at the aforementioned Microbar in Vesturgata, Reykjavik, owned by Gæðingur brewery, where we got to try a sample tray of a dozen local craft drafts, including 2 10% barley wines, and nothing less than 5% – not bad for a first foray! We moved on to Icelandic Fish and Chips round the corner, where the eponymous dish was a delight, accompanied by a 7.3% Kaldi IPA, as clean and fresh as the fish. Subsequent days yielded a visit to the nearby Skuli Bar, where another formidable array of Icelandic Ales awaited, including Ulfur at a modest 5.9%, but with a rather less modest price tag of £10 for 400ml – that's an eye-popping £15 a pint. And that is the big problem with Iceland. It is mind-bogglingly, unbelievably, expensive.



Nothing can prepare you for the astonishingly high prices in Iceland, as breathtaking as being caught in a blizzard in Reykjavik (and yes, I speak from experience). A long weekend there will set you back as much as a week in St Moritz, and still leave you searching desperately for an ATM. If you lay all the people end to end who can comfortably afford to drink in Reykjavik, they will die of hypothermia, but you could trade in their bodies to buy a round in a local bar. To say that the cost of living is high in Iceland is like saying the Archbishop of

match, or useless gifts. However, once you venture outside the city, the landscape is breathtaking, especially after the first snows of Winter. Geysers, glaciers and lakes are all in the package, with a big helping of snowy peaks. If Reykjavik bore half the promise of its environs, visitors would warm to it instead of trying to warm in it. The scenery is stunning, the people are delightful, the food (especially the fish)



is superb, and the beer measures up to the world's best in quantity, quality and variety. All styles are represented, from modest pale ales to imperial stouts, and most beers are upwards of 5%; if strong beer is your bag, Iceland will fill it. Indeed, beer is the national drink (they even



ISLE OF WIGHT BUS AND COACH MUSEUM

Come and see our collection of vintage buses & coaches.

Visit the shop & tearoom.

See the displays of memorabilia and artefacts.

FREE ADMISSION

Open from April 9th 2017 Sundays
Wednesdays Thursdays & Bank
Holidays until 29th October

The Bus Depot
Park Road, Ryde PO33 2BE

www.iwbusmuseum.org.uk

A registered charity 1097347



Royal British Legion, Ventnor

The Campaign for Real Ale is actively involved with supporting clubs especially those serving proper beer. CAMRA does indeed organise a club of the year competition. To this end I arranged a social at my local club, The Royal British Legion in Ventnor.

The evening was an outstanding success although I was nervous about attendees drifting away to nearby watering holes. For my sins I was persuaded to take on the role of Clubs Officer in the branch. It did indeed take a lot of persuasion.

As a result of this activity which included a mail shot to most clubs on the Island I will follow it up with a series of articles featuring certain clubs. I am starting with Ventnor RBL as it is a favourite and therefore I may be accused of a bias which I accept.

The club is located at the top end of town adjacent to the old Burts Brewery buildings. Inside, the club is large and welcoming with more than ample seating. Events such as live music take place regularly. Four real ales are offered on a never ending rotation, resulting in plenty of choice. Jeff the steward ensures the beer is in tip top condition and because of the clubs popularity it is quickly turned over. Jeff will allow access to card carrying Camra members but the rules and constitution mean you really should join.

The British Legion is of course a charity that deserves support. I am particularly fond of them as they helped my parents buy their first home after the Second World War. Membership is currently £19 annually so it is far from expensive. The beers are sold at Wetherspoon prices so savings there quickly cover joining. Jeff would be more than happy to discuss membership and to my mind it is one of Ventnor's hidden gems. Do try it out.



David Dines

Jeff and Mark

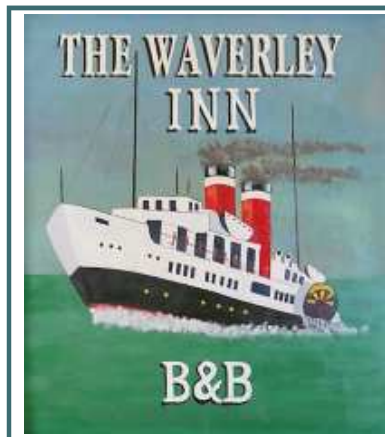
Start: Shorwell Parish Hall in Russell Road.
Description: A five mile walk along
 bridleways, a ridgeway and open countryside.
Access Information: No stiles. One hill at the
 start of the walk leads to spectacular views
 along the ridge looking towards St Catherine's
 Down and the coast. Views of Wolverton
 Manor, one of three Elizabethan manors in
 Shorwell.



Route:

From the car park (1) turn right and go left
 at Farriers Way. After Stone Place Farm
 and adjacent to the cemetery, turn right through a gate onto bridleway SW11
 (2). Follow this to the top of the hill and follow the path right (3). This path goes through
 a hedge gap and a gate and then continues with the hedge now on your right. Go along
 the ridgeway and then through an enclosed path. Then turn right (4) down the hillside
 passing a small wooden seat. Pass a wood and emerge from SW47 onto a road. Here turn
 left (5) and reach the entrance to Bucks Farm (6).
 Follow the farm road and after about 100 yds, turn right to pass by a gate and then keep
 on SW54 following the track around the buildings. Follow the track (7) across four large
 fields. Turn right at a crossway of tracks (8) onto a green path with a hedge on the left.
 Follow SW56 to Dungewood Farm. Keep left of the buildings at the farm and emerge
 onto a metalled track.
 Follow Dungewood Lane to a left hand bend and
 then turn right at a 6-bar metal gate onto a
 bridleway SW17a (9).
 Go through a 7-bar metal gate, following the
 track towards the right. Leave SW17a at a
 wooden pedestrian gate and continue on SW18
 towards Shorwell. Follow the path on the right

*This pub walk was
 devised by the Isle of
 Wight branch of
 the Ramblers
 Association
 to whom we are most grateful.*



Tim and Julie look forward to welcoming you to
 The
WAVERLEY INN
 CARISBROOKE
 Now with Six En-Suite Bed and Breakfast Rooms
 11 draught beers and ciders (IOW real ales)
 Food: Mon - Sat: 8am - 2.30pm and 6pm - 8.30pm
 Sunday Lunch - £6.95 booking recommended
 Storm Café open for breakfast Mon - Sat from 8am
 Telephone: 01983 522338
www.waverleyinn.co.uk

A Beerhead Abroad:

So, there we were, flying across the cold North
 Atlantic on Icelandair, where nothing is
 complimentary except the Wi-Fi. The Wi-Fi is
 complimentary because the only site you can
 access is Icelandair. Trip Advisor guide to what's
 hot in Iceland, apart from the geysers - Icelandair. Craft beer guide to Reykjavik
 - Icelandair. I loaded up my Kindle and all I got was an Icelandic saga about
 Magnus Magnusson and a big black chair, and the chosen subject was Icelandair.
 When we arrived in Iceland we jibed merrily with Immigration, swept onwards to
 the tense lottery of baggage reclaim, and thence to the bleary light of a
 Reykjavik November afternoon. It was twilight for 3 hours, then it was twilight.
 After that it was dark, but no one noticed; in the morning, it was twilight. Twilight
 is a big deal in Iceland in early Winter; there's a lot of it, and it's very popular
 because it's the only thing you don't have to pay for.



Reykjavik has the feel of a small country town in Wales, but without the thrills. It
 contains little of architectural merit (though we did admire the apartment blocks
 – so uniform), and the shops either sell grossly overpriced knitwear, shoes to

Simeon Arms, Ryde

Richard Adams has taken over from Jamie Clarke at The Simeon Arms.

Richard was born on the island and grew up in Ryde. After travelling and working around Australia, Thailand and Sri Lanka, he has always returned home and worked periodically at the Simeon since 2008.

He left his job last August to move into the pub and run it with Jamie to settle back into pub life. The sale finally went through in December and the pub enjoyed a busy Christmas and new year!

The hard work has started to get the kitchen open again in time for Easter. Other plans include re-decorating and hosting more live music. Richard intends to keep the pub as it is with the current selection of local real ales.

Richard said "Jamie ran a great pub and as the old saying goes 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it....' Except the toilets, we **have** fixed the toilets."



hand side of the field. At a telegraph pole, go through a wooden bridlegate and follow the path left for about 50 yds. Turn right across the field on a grassy track. Go through a gap and follow the path uphill to a gateway on the left. Turn left and follow the path with a hedge on the right until you reach a narrow path which descends to the left. Follow this path, with views of Wolverton Manor, until a road is reached. Turn right and follow this to houses. By the postbox, turn left into Russell road to reach the car park.

Please Note:
If you are starting your walk from **The Crown**, on leaving the pub turn left, then turn right at the roundabout into Farriers Way. Point (2) is immediately after the cemetery.






THE CULVER HAVEN INN

Located at one of its highest points, The Culver Haven Inn boasts some of the best views on the Isle of Wight

As well as an ever-changing variety of real ales, beers and wines, we also serve a range of delicious pub dishes

With friendly staff and a cosy atmosphere, The Culver Haven Inn is the perfect place to take the weight off of your feet — or paws!



Culver Down, Sandown PO36 8QT (01983) 406107 www.culverhaven.com

FOOD SERVED ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

LOCAL PRODUCE A SPECIALITY

DELICIOUS SUNDAY ROASTS



THE CROWN INN
— SHORWELL —

Proud to now be part of the Character family

CASK MARQUE REAL ALES

EXTENSIVE WINE LIST

LARGE GARDEN WITH TROUT STREAM

Walkers Lane, Shorwell, Isle of Wight, PO30 3JZ





Tel: 740293 | www.thecrowninnshorwell.co.uk | **crownniwo**

10% OFF!

YOUR BILL WITH THIS ADVERT E&OE

♠ Playing Cards ♣

One aspect of breweriana often overlooked by collectors, especially as we seem to have passed the heyday of card playing in pubs and clubs, or at least the vision of smoke filled rooms full of men in flat caps chain smoking and quaffing pints of mild is to think of the past.

In the past a great many breweries produced their own playing cards and therefore this has inevitably led to an army of keen collectors and so a society, The British Brewery Playing Card Society (<http://www.bbpcs.org.uk/>). This society publishes a catalogue of the huge number of cards that they are aware of and also offer the sales of cards. In order to spread the few available around, and to keep the costs (and storage space) down, most people collect single cards rather than full packs, but as with everything there are many variations, e.g. some may only collect jokers or other specific cards.

Mike Johnson of the BBPCS has told me 'Advertising on cards in general started in the early 20th Century. During the inter-war period and the 1945-60 post Second World War era playing card games was very popular in pubs hence the prolific issue by the breweries. There has been a steady decline ever since with about twelve a year being the current rate. Guinness still regularly issues playing cards but some of these are for their off-shoots abroad. Murphy's occasionally issue a pack which indicates that playing card games are still part of pub culture in Ireland. A recent development has been the number of new small breweries issuing cards, e.g. Redwell Brewery, Rye River Brewing Company and the Purple Moose Brewery.'

In terms of the Isle of Wight, as far as I am aware the only brewer to produce playing cards was Mew Langton, who produced six known style of cards, one of which appeared in two different colour schemes. There have been rumours of a pack from Burts but I can find no one has seen it (do please let us know if you have).



The six different known Mew Langton playing cards are shown here. It is believed that these all date from the 1950s except No. 3 (Hop Vines) from the early 1920s, and No. 5 (with the bottle at an angle) which is from the 1930s. No. 2 with the bottle on the red background is also known with a blue border.

Mike Johnson also asks if anyone has a copy of No. 6 – a well known image used in Mew Langton's adverting and signs, as we have not seen a copy of the card.

As well as Mew Langton, other breweries were represented by their beers on sale on the Island and no doubt many of these provided playing cards as one of the many means of advertising. These would include George Gale, Brickwood, Strong and possibly Portsmouth United and Blakes of Gosport, as well as national breweries and brands such as Whitbread, Bass, Worthington, Guinness, etc.

There are, of course, many breweries still producing playing cards and these can often be found in the shop if on a brewery visit – a cheap way of acquiring tomorrow's collectable.

The Brewery History Society's book 'A Century of British Brewers - plus plus: 1890-2012' contains brief details of the 10,500 breweries operating between 1890-2012 that they are aware of and is an essential guide for finding out about any of the brewers represented in your collection of breweriana, or in your distant memory of youthful pints from long lost breweries.

Jeff Sechiari

My thanks to Mike Johnson of The British Brewery Playing Card Society