

Wightwash

Volume 2, Number 79

Newsletter of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA

Spring Issue 2019

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



NUMBER ONE!



See Page Five



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

In this FREE issue: **Southsea Bubbles**
Beer & Buses part two
Fish & Chickens **Cider News**

The Pubco Issue **PRIZE QUIZ**

and much, much more...

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FOR
REAL ALE**

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New for 2019

Web: yeoldevillageinn.com



Mike Hoar explains how it all works:

Pubs

To be eligible a pub had to be open for business for a reasonable period of time during the year, open at the time voting began and serve at least one real ale.

Of the 127 eligible establishments, 77 received 1 or more votes.

This year it was particularly exciting as the top places were changing right up to the last day.

Beers

To be eligible a beer had to be available across the Island at some time in the year. Pub specials were not eligible, but seasonal and those brewed for Beer & Buses were. All 27 eligible beers received at least 1 vote.

1	RAILWAY, Ryde	1	Earls R.D.A, Island Brewery
2	NEWPORT ALE HOUSE	2	Fuggle-Dee-Dum, Goddards
3	CASTLE INN, Sandown	3	Yachtsman's Ale, Island Brewery
4	KING HARRY'S BAR, Shanklin	4	Duck's Folly, Goddards
5	TRAVELLER'S JOY, Northwood	5	Ale of Wight, Goddards
6	JOE'S BAR, Niton	6	Yule Be Sorry, Yates'
6	S. FOWLERS and Co. Ryde	6	Dark Side of the Wight, Yates'
8	SHIP AND CASTLE, East Cowes	8	Wight Squirrel, Goddards
9	RED LION, Freshwater	9	Wight Christmas, Island Brewery
9	VOLUNTEER, Ventnor	10	Islander, Yates'
10	COWES ALE HOUSE		

Interesting Statistics

A total 126 members voted - a 36.63% turnout (possibly better than IW council local elections!).

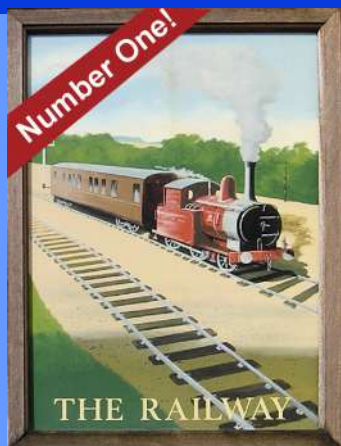
This compares to 95 voters last year, a 32.63% increase.

Of the 126 voters, 110 voted on-line and 16 by post.

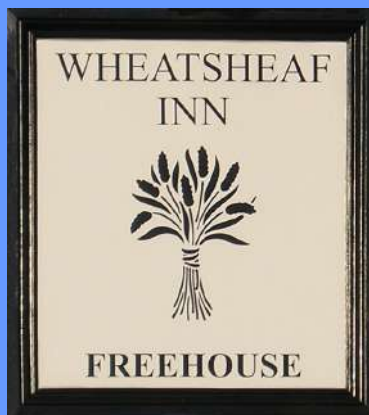
There are more details on the website: wightwash.org.uk

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

Freehouses with Real Ale at popular prices :



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The Railway & The Wheatsheaf are family & dog friendly pubs and are easily accessible by train & bus (No. 3)

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Over the last few months we've got ourselves in a bit of a pickle with the membership list. The chief culprit has been the lovely *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*.

Anyway, to cut a long and wearisome story short, we are currently posting Wightwash to all members.

In most cases this is fine. However, there are occasions where it's not necessary.

For instance:

some members are happy to read the on-line version,

some members are happy to pick up a copy from the pub and

some members help with distribution and have access to lots of copies.

If you fit into one of those categories and are happy not to have Wightwash posted to you, please let us know.

Email editor@wightwash.org.uk or

telephone 01983 721557 (if you leave a message, please tell us your name and post code)

Please be aware that all members will receive the Winter Issue by post as it will include a Pub and Beer of the Year voting form.



Who's Who

Chairman and BeerPoint coordinator

John Nicholson

jnl@johnnicholson.co.uk

Secretary: Alec Lawson

alec.lawson@virgin.net

Treasurer and Wightwash Advertising

Ken (Buzzy) Matthews

camraiw@aol.com

GBG coordinator: Mike Hoar

mike.camraiw@gmail.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 2019



Branch Pub of the Year 2017

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Old Village, Shanklin

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Island Brewery The Dark Beer Kings?

How often do you come across the misconception that dark beers don't sell? I hear it all the time, but from people who like weak tea, drink pallid white wine and tasteless lagers. On the other hand, I often see people in serious ale houses asking specially for dark beers. I often hear this in **Newport Ale House** or **Man in the Moon**, and, even abroad, like when I was on a recent visit to Barcelona and visited its impressive craft beer bars. (More about this in the next issue.)

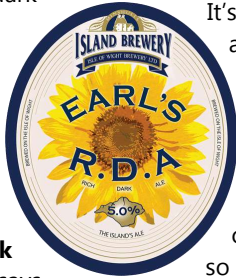
It leads you to the conclusion that there are people who drink beer and there are beer drinkers. Funny that in English we do not readily facilitate this distinction between one

who does and one who is. But, in Spanish for example, they do distinguish between a transitory state and a permanent one, where the verb to be, *estoy* is transitory, and the verb to be, *soy* is persistent – *estoy caliente* can mean I am hot (for the moment); whereas *soy caliente* can mean I am sexy (persistent)! In Spanish they recognise that a transitory state is not the person; it is what they are doing or feel in the passing moment, so you *have* hunger or thirst, and it is normal to refer to the act of drinking (bebiendo) as that of taking: *tomando* – *quieres tomar* (do you want to drink). I don't know, though, that it would follow to distinguish a beer drinker in this way as *soy un tomador*, or *soy un bebador*, you would probably just say *soy un aficionado* = *I am an aficionado* – there I have said it!

DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER



Anyway, enough of this nonsense! Now that we have established that dark beers do sell, and, in fact, are very popular amongst proper drinkers, this could be the call for more dark delights from Island Brewery. 'We already brew specials like **Marmalade Porter, Oatmeal Stout**, and black IPAs like **Black Knight** and **in Rod we Trust**,' says Steve Minshull, brewery owner, 'but, now, with **Earl's RDA** having won local Beer of the Year 5 times running and been voted best stout in the world, I suppose that is a good indication that another more regular dark brew might be well received.' Steve ponders and I wonder if I could persuade Chris to do a small experimental brew of my favourite from Barcelona – **Garage**



Sour Raspberry Stout?

It's peculiar how these things happen, and it is just recently that I have been approached by an enthusiast collector from Portugal, looking to add to his beer can collection with some 5ltr cans from Island Brewery. He is also seeking other cans from other brewers in the UK, so I have referred him to my mate Jeff Sechiari, BLO for Yates', but also chairman of the Brewery History Society with extensive connections in the brewing industry. My new Portuguese friend says that he has quite a considerable collection of cans and knows a lot of the Portuguese and Spanish small craft brewers – termed garage brewers, or garage beer, colloquially. I am hoping that I can get an article or two out of him on this subject

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from a Latin perspective, for Wightwash – (watch this space!)

Before I sign off, I should say that the drawings are done for the new brewery building in Northwood, and tenders for building it will soon be sought. ~“We hope to get it finished for the autumn ideally, after the summer rush, and we will have more time to move and set up” says Steve.

Very lastly, Island Brewery are going through the strict accreditation process demanded by supermarkets and designed to ensure that rigorous quality control standards are employed and adhered to in the food (beer) production process. ‘This is good’, says Chris, ‘we already do most of it anyway.’ Chris continues, ‘so all I am doing is formalising it in a standard documentary format.’ This is all very well, Chris’, I say, ‘and I know you have always worked to these high military grade standards, but what

happens when your beer gets delivered to certain pubs who might not clean their lines properly, and look after the beer well enough, serve it at the wrong temperature, or just keep it on for too long, way past the three days optimum. Who polices this? Who protects the drinker in this situation from being poisoned by bad beer?’ Chris glances at me with his eyebrows raised, giving a long shrug to his shoulders, then lets out a deep breath.

John Nicholson
BLO Island Brewery

Yates’ Brewery

Winter is gently slipping into spring, at least with the recent heat wave and glorious swathes of daffodils we could be forgiven for thinking so, but no doubt the weather will have the final say, biting us when our guard is down.

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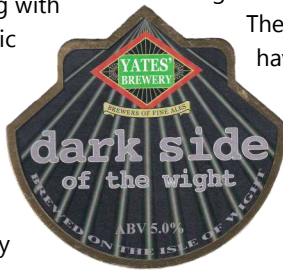
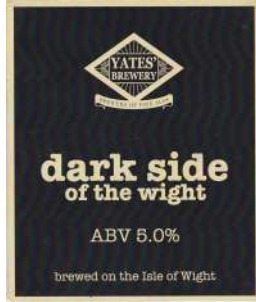
The Highdown Beer Festival – 5th to 7th July

Telephone: 01983 752450

Highdown Lane, Totland, Isle of Wight, PO39 OHY

www.highdowninn.co.uk

I have been consoling myself with the opportunity to enjoy some full flavoured dark beers ('Dark beers don't sell, you know') – there's nothing nicer on a cold night than a rich pint of 'Dark Side of the Wight' in a warm and friendly pub - last night it was the Newport Ale House, buzzing with conversation from an eclectic mix of happy punters exploring the delights on offer, especially Dark Side, which seemed extremely popular. In fact Chairman John tells me that when they



were doing some pub surveys recently everyone in one venue was clutching a pint of it (did I mention that 'Dark beers don't sell, you know'?).

Hayley tells me that wholesale trade has been as good as it can be for February and they are now looking forward to the hotels opening up again and having another busy summer.

They are also delighted that AJ Wells have placed another order for their bottles and are also very pleased with the response for contract brews for mainland customers / breweries.



ISLE OF WIGHT STEAM RAILWAY

14th ANNUAL REAL ALE FESTIVAL

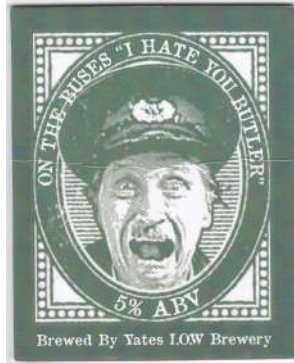
4th – 7th May

Enjoy the Spring Bank Holiday with a pint of your favourite tippie, whether it be national or local brew.

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11am – 5pm Bank Holiday Monday

As we have just had the first Beer & Buses meeting it seemed appropriate that Hayley also tells me that they will be looking at recipes to launch a new beer for the event. I look forward to tasting what they come up with, although I hope it doesn't mean the end of 'On the Buses' – we really have been spoiled with the beers our Island brewers produce for us for this amazing event. In spite of all that good news, the most exciting news for me is that David "is planning to have a play in the brewery this summer and is looking at doing one off 'craft beers', so keep an eye out for some



new names this summer". I look forward to it with eager anticipation.

Jeff Sechiari
BLO, Yates Brewery

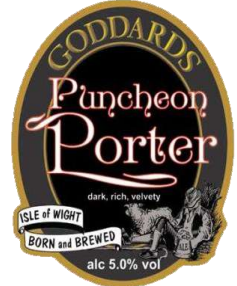
Goddards Brewery

They sought him here, they sought him there, that elusive Puncheon Porter

As I revealed in the winter edition Goddards decided (after many

requests from customers) to bring out a winter Porter, they called it Puncheon.

According to Nigel and Josh it is a "robust, silky smooth




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porter with an intense depth of flavour obtained from Crystal Rye and Challenger hops". However, how many of you had the same difficulty as me in chasing down a sample. Goddards had a problem, they knew which pubs had bought it, but not when it would be on sale and as they only did a limited-edition brew there were no top up orders available. They assure me this was not an intended publicity stunt! But it sure got people talking.

In early February the lads decided to take a few days off and a contingent from Goddards travelled up to Olympia for Pub 19. A dedicated show for the UK pub industry. Of course, they took a few samples to share. Among the suppliers, pub representatives, wholesalers and breweries they received particularly good reviews for the **Quarr Abbey Ale**. Chatting with these attendees has provided them with inspiration and new ideas (hopefully we will see the fruition in the not so distant future). They appear to have had a good time as you can see in the photo, Kevin on the left and Josh on the right.

Talking of **Inspiration**, it won't be long before this strong pale ale will be available, being released in early April in time for Easter. If you haven't tried it, it is a definite 'summer', refreshingly citrusy ale, which despite its strength has a fresh, zingy taste.

A word about Wetherspoon's. They are currently in Goddards good books as **Wight Squirrel** went on a UK wide tour as Wetherspoons took it as a national guest ale. The number of casks they took

equated to 34,992 pints! Reports say that it reached London, parts of Sussex and The Midlands and even up to Moray in Scotland – I wonder how many 'overners' complained about the spelling of Wight?



Mike Hoar
BLO, Goddards Brewery



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THE
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Bridge Road, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, PO41 0PH

It's been a busy and exciting time at the Isle of Wight Distillery, as our stunning new eco-friendly bottles have arrived, bottling is underway and they're being distributed far and wide. We're also busy planning a pilot refill scheme, which will enable Islanders to have bottles refilled on site – minimising waste and reducing costs for our customers.

Our long-awaited whisky is also due for release in the near future – it became legal on December 16th 2018 and is currently being rested and matured. No bottling dates are confirmed as yet, but sign up to the newsletter on our website for updates. We're hoping to make summer especially sweet, as our new Pink Mermaid Gin will soon be available to buy in local pubs and of course, at the Distillery. We've spent a great deal of time perfecting this recipe, finally settling on fresh, Isle of Wight strawberries to complement the smooth flavour of Mermaid.

If you're passing The Mermaid Bar at The Wishing Well, pop in to see the Distillery in action and have a tasting of our award-winning spirits. If gin isn't for you, just relax, enjoy the view with a local ale, craft beer or a cup of Island Roasted coffee.



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f i t
@mermaidbariow

A few weeks ago, John Nicholson forwarded me an e-mail from The Garden Cider Company, Chiddingfold, Surrey. The content caught my attention in two ways. Firstly, I actually knew where Chiddingfold was. It is close to Haslemere where I resided back in the 80's. Secondly, I noted that they made "Real Cider" meeting CAMRA's criteria. This was intriguing as it's the West Country that's normally best known for the production of Real Cider. I have spent a lot of hours visiting Island pubs and Island cider producers. Sadly I have been unable to locate any establishment that has supplied, sold, nor produced CAMRA's definition of Real Cider. Frustratingly, I found on my travels that the remaining Island cider producer does not allow visits or tours. I was excited to find a Real Cider producer a short distance away off the A3 that welcomed visitors. I arranged a visit immediately.

I was delighted to meet co-owner Ben Filby at Mill House Farm where the operation has been producing cider for around nine years. Speaking to Ben, I instantly got the impression he was extremely proud of his cider and he was appreciative of the surrounding community for supplying apples to the business. The company had a great family feel to it. I noticed the hard



working Sales Rep enjoyed getting stuck into the bottling side of the operation. At present, Garden Cider relies on the community to supply the apples as they do not, as yet, have their own orchard. It does appear that apple trees have been planted in a nearby field to supply the company in the future. The great thing about the community deal is that people supplying the apples get a percentage back in cider at no cost to the apple supplier. This is a great deal for the community. I seem to recall an IOW Orchard actually charged the apple supplier in return for cider!



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The apples brought in to the farm are checked for suitability. Only wild yeast present on the apple produces the alcohol in the cider. This normally ferments out to around 6% ABV depending on the sugar content of the apples. Early apples tend to have less sugar content than those brought in later in the season. The liquid is then left to ferment naturally for a year then racked off in the spring. The liquid is then blended by acidity and taste.

The CAMRA friendly cider box is Vintage Dry at 6% ABV. Other ciders made are Wild Strawberry, Plum & Ginger, Raspberry & Rhubarb, Elderflower, Blueberry and more fascinating to me, Dry Hopped cider made with Cascade hops. Fruit ciders are produced by using syrup. I can vouch that the Vintage Dry is an excellent cider. There is also a bottling set up on site. The cider for this process goes through the normal pasteurisation, filtering and carbonation process. The bottles are labelled here. All fruit bottled ciders are 4%, the "Original" bottled cider is 5%.

The cider is then shipped locally to pubs and regionally via wholesalers. Exports include Russia & America. It was amazing to see how an ordinary

unwanted apple from someone's back garden could find its way to the trendy bars in Moscow.

On behalf of CAMRA members, it was an honour to be able to sample the boxed and bottled cider range on your behalf and report back to you. The 6% Vintage Dry was remarkable. You have to appreciate the apples are not picked from an orchard with a specific variety, but all apples regardless of variety are used and blended. I can also highly recommend the bottled ciders; my wife now prefers their fruit ciders to drinking wine. The mixed selection I drove away with has been somewhat depleted. Oh well, another trip to Chiddingfold. Tours can be arranged via their website:

www.thegardencidercompany.co.uk.

If you get a chance it is well worth a visit to an excellent cider company that places the community at the heart of its cider production

Finally a big thanks to all at Garden Cider who gave me their time and made me feel very welcome. Hopefully their Real Cider will be seen in establishments on the Island.

John Glazebrook
IOW Local Cider Rep



THE CASTLE INN
12 -14 FITZROY STREET
www.sandowncastle.co.uk

EASTER ALE FESTIVAL

FRIDAY 19th APRIL
UNTIL
SUNDAY 21st APRIL

The Issue with Pubcos

There is a lot of local noise currently about Pubcos, centred around the unprecedented number of pub closures on the Island; landlords saying that they cannot afford to keep going in the face of making a trading loss whilst the Pubco creams off the profits. But what is the truth? Why do some pubs keep going, the landlords seemingly making a success whilst others do not?

How Did We Get Here?

With very few exceptions, gone are the days when it was the local brewery that owned a small estate of local public houses and theirs was the only beer that you could get. These small-scale operations worked to mutual benefit. It was in the brewery's direct interest to make sure the beer was good, so that they sold more, and advice and quality assurance services were all part of the package - well, in most cases.

Things changed when a group of six larger brewers embarked on a programme to take over smaller brewers and, arguably, profits became the focus, losing the historic communal family nature of brewing, pride in the product and respect for the customer's wants – Watney's Red Barrel was the culmination of the attempt to commodify brewing, with its history and heritage, into a some artificially inspired watered down and sanitised version.

CAMRA and Its Reactionary Foundations

But, as often is the case, the British public would not stand for it. Pushed around to their limit, in true Churchillian spirit, the David took on the Goliath that was the big six national breweries, and CAMRA was born, growing to become the largest consumer campaigning organisation Britain has ever seen; its influence ultimately spreading beyond these shores to even protect international heritage brewing, like that of the Czech brewery Budvar against the predatory commercial American giant and producer of marketed synthetic beer. There is no doubt that if it were not for British consumers and the campaign that they waged, the unique style of cask conditioned ale, that resides in Britain, would have all but disappeared, and to get a smattering of its replacements you only have to look at the synthetic lagers that persist today, products that are not lagered at all, and are like chalk is to cheese when compared with any Reinheitsgebot or other splendid continental originals.

Vigilance in a New World

But the war is not won; vigilance is still necessary to guard our history and

clear brew

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culture from surreptitious attack. It is true that it was the basis of our Real Ale that gave rise to craft brewing, with all its fusion of styles, punchy flavours and improvisational norm. Yet, we have to beware that this style is not hijacked by the financially orientated large players to drive insipid mass-marketed synthetic products in that name.

In its diversity, craft brewing recognises that greatest excellence can be achieved through a natural live product – cask conditioned beer – attested by the likes of BrewDog who

have recently made statements along those lines. But the biggest threat to Real Ale is from within. It is found in the pubs who blindly support it without passion or understanding the product. Sadly, a situation expounded by the beer writer Pete Brown, who attests to often having a keg craft version or none at all, rather than risk a poorly kept cask alternative.

Destroying Ourselves from Within

In our annual assessment visits to check eligibility for the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, the local Branch all too often come across pubs who seem incapable of looking after their cask beers, demonstrably unable to maintain acceptable standard of quality. Common faults and failures include such basic elements such as wrong temperature, lines not properly cleaned, standing beer not pulled through and stale oxidised beer remaining on tap past three days. There can be no greater example of adding insult to injury than being offered a poorly kept pint at an inflated price!

But what about the price? This is a huge issue, and one not necessarily within the control of the poor landlord, contrary to popular belief. For much of the drinking population, near £5 a pint is too much to bear for any sustained period, causing support for their local to un-wantonly wain in favour of more affordable alternatives. This may then lead to low turnover, which, in turn, leads to poor quality – it's a no-brainer really!

Where Does All the Money Go?

Where does all the money go? Good



GODDARDS
BREWERY

Awaken your senses
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regulars...

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ISLE of WIGHT
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question. High rents and beer duty have often been in the news, but, although they play a part, they are, in the grand scale of things, somewhat of a red-herring. The point was well illustrated on a visit to an Island landlord recently, the once popular town centre pub, empty at the time. The landlord candidly told us that he had made a trading loss in the last year and had now managed to persuade the Pubco (also the brewery) to reduce the rent, but the landlord went on to say, this was not the crux of the problem. By the landlord's calculations, the brewery was making a cool £150K per annum on their inflated drinks prices to which the pub was tied (whilst the pub would be lucky to break even). On top of this, the pub paid business rates on turnover, not profit, so whilst the business was being crucified by the profiteering of the pubco, it was being nailed by business rates, whilst the pubco creamed off Scott-free! The situation was, therefore, a landlord struggling to survive, driving away customers with high prices forced by an unsympathetic profiteering Pubco, leading to low throughput of beer which risks turning greater numbers of customers away, and so the downward spiral is set.

So unashamedly widespread is this dreadful practice allowed to pervade that we even heard of one situation where the Pubco intercepted the water bill and tripled it in their charge to the landlord!

Two Sides to The Coin

Yet there is another side. For all their faults and criticism, the Pubcos do support the industry in some constructive ways. There are, perhaps, some more astute landlords who negotiate better deals and structure their business more efficiently. There are successful managed houses too. Pubcos do carry a degree of due diligence in their business arrangements with landlords that is often unseen and underrated. They do provide an overseeing eye, advice and structure to the pub in a greater or lesser form, and as may be needed.

This becomes most evident when a pub becomes liberated from tie or becomes a free-house. In some sad cases we then find out that the landlord cannot order or keep the beers properly, so supplies are erratic, as is quality. Customers wishing to support the landlord, find their good will being betrayed by tired beer, infected or dirty lines, erratic supplies, even no beer at times. What can you say – lead a horse to water

John Nicholson

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Fail to clean lines thoroughly or properly. Biofilms are a mixture of bacteria and yeast and can be resilient once established	Old yeast and biofilms establish in the lines, infecting the beer, tainting its taste. Result, people don't return, causing decline	Regularly clean lines. Best with chemical indicator that detects infections. There are professional services that claim to save money in doing this	Reputation spreads and custom builds
Serve customers beer that has been standing in lines (getting warm and stale)	Warm, stale beer is unpleasant and drives loss of customer return visits	Always pull beer that has been standing through	Reputation spreads and custom builds
Keep and serve Real Ale too cold or too warm outside recommended temperature (serve between 11 -13 deg C)	Real Ale is a live product; above or below recommended temperature taints it and drives discerning customers away	Store and serve within recommended temperatures to avoid yeast taints and facilitate good natural carbonation	Pristine, untainted beer served at optimum temperature builds customer loyalty
Restrict choice to a few insipid national brands	Real Ale lovers often seek diversity in style and range and will seek it elsewhere	Try something different. Ask Real Ale drinkers what they like and would come back for	Reputation spreads and custom builds.
Close up when not busy, although you may advertise that you are open	Anyone visiting and finding the pub shut will hesitate to come back at another time	Stay open and welcoming for chance visiting customers	If all the above quality measures are met, reputation will spread and build
Employ surly staff that don't welcome or engage	People often come to a pub to socialise and share ideas and experience	Employ friendly staff who can engage at many levels when required	Reputation spreads and custom builds
Don't train staff in what to do and your product range	Lack of knowledge can be read as lack of enthusiasm and has uninspiring effect	Train staff in what to do and in product knowledge	Staff that know their subject inspire confidence. Reputation spreads and custom builds



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Preparations for the Isle of Wight Classic Buses, Beer and Walks Weekend 2019 are well underway, and we've already had a couple of meetings. Bus owners have been in contact from all over the country (more about that in the Summer Issue) and we will be bringing as many over as we can.

The routes have yet to be finalised, but we can tell you that there will be at least one new route which will include East Cowes for the first time.

This year we will be including some "family themed" venues. If we believe our own statistics, last year as many as 8,000 passengers didn't consider pubs as their primary interest so we wanted to give them a reason to "get off the bus".

As usual, we would love to hear from you if you can spare a few hours over the weekend to help us. Please phone Paul Sheldon on 01983 611063

Wightwash and Beer & Buses are now embracing QR technology. If you have a QR app on your mobile phone, the 2D barcode in the corner will take you straight to the Beer & Buses website



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This article comes about after I read something in an old copy of Readers Digest which reminded me of our recent holiday in China (see Autumn Wightwash).

In Bangkok we stumbled across the oddly named **Feat Lab** bar purely by accident by way of Pratunam Market which is situated next to a river/canal. As we passed the fish stall, a local held up a what looked like a catfish, shouted something akin to "beer" and mimicked drinking a pint. I eventually concluded that he was trying to explain that this particular type of fish was used in the brewing process. Believe it or not I had a similar experience in Saigon with a poultry salesman.

Fish and Chickens in beer? What would the EEC say?

In 2003 the EEC issued a directive that required a full ingredient list for all "common food allergens".

But first, why put fish in beer?



As long ago as 11 AD the Romans noticed that wine stored in vessels made from fish swim bladders was less likely to be cloudy.

English brewers started adding Isinglass, a product of fish swim bladders, to beer in the 16th century. It is thought that the discovery was made when medieval brewers used dried bladders as vessels and noted that the beer

was much clearer. Thus, when commercial brewing expanded at the end of 18th century, the addition of Isinglass to beer became routine. What they wouldn't have known is that the active ingredient of Isinglass is *collagen*, a protein with a triple helix. This triple helix winds itself into a net like structure with a positive (+) charge.

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Under normal circumstances, what makes beer cloudy is the suspension of yeast particles. Yeast particles have a negative (-) charge. The negative and positive charged cells join together making much larger particles which quickly drop to the bottom.

As a footnote, a beer ready to be racked typically contains around 1 million yeast cells per millilitre.

Now – chickens!?



Well, Cock Ale was all the rage in the 17th and 18th centuries;

King William III preferred it to wine. In fact, there is a theory that “Cock Ale” is where the term “Cocktail” originated.

Here’s a recipe from 1669...

“Take ten gallons of ale, and a large cock, the older the better, parboil the cock, flay him, and stamp on him in a stone mortar till his bones are broken (you must crawl and gut him when you flay him) then take four pounds of raisins of the sun well stoned (!) two or three nutmegs, three or four flakes of mace, half a pound of dates; get these all in a mortar and put to them two quarts of the best sack and when the ale hath done working, put these in and stop it close six or seven days, and then bottle it, and a month after you may drink”

Yum yum!

A note to vegans: You’ll probably be hard pushed to find a vegan “cock ale” but several brewers now produce vegan friendly beer (see www.barnivore.com). Strangely, there’s one in Estonia called “Le Coq”.

Paul Sheldon



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In the last issue we left Brian at the splendid Phoenix pub, temporary home to Mickey and Diamond, the two white ponies employed to tow Cinderella's carriage at the nearby King's Theatre.

We pick up Brian's tour as he continues his tour of Southsea.....



From here, our tour starts in earnest, or Albert Street as it's more commonly known, because there are enough good pubs around here to make it worth leaving a mark where you left off and coming back next day.

Let's first head around the corner to a cask beer icon known to many Island visitors, the Vaults. This Fuller's establishment has been known at various times as the Wine Vaults (remember those 70s wine bars?), then the Beer Vaults, and now The Vaults; next year it will probably be called The V. The stripped-wood rustic interior appeals to all ages, and it's a great favourite of students and others of a young persuasion (remember that?), which can give rise to misunderstandings in the form of live music and discos which need to be engaged in with some caution by



A collage of images for The Chequers Inn. The central part features a large photograph of the inn's exterior, a white building with a red roof. Below this is a grey box with the text: "THE CHEQUERS INN", "Rookley PO38 3NZ", "01983 840314", and "www.chequersinn-iow.co.uk". Surrounding this central text are smaller images: a barmaid in a grey apron, a chef plating a dish, a man and a woman in a restaurant setting, a close-up of a salmon dish, and a barmaid behind a bar.

those of a mature disposition. However, you're safe enough during the day when, apart from the normal Fuller's range (including ESB), you can enjoy three guest beers and more craft beers than you can shake a walking stick at. Two of these will almost certainly be the impressive Fuller's London Porter (5.4%) and Golden Pride, which, at 8.5% and very easy drinking, is extremely dangerous.



Just up the road, on the other side, is the 5th Hants Volunteer, the pub in which the local CAMRA branch was founded – I can remember this and the Vaults were highlights of any Southsea run back in the 1980s. It's a 2-bar street-corner local owned by Fuller's, and you can enjoy HSB or Pride in unpretentious, and largely furniture-free surroundings, which gives new meaning to standing a round (please don't throw sharp things at me).

Shortly after leaving here and crossing the road, you'll pass the Royal Albert and, bolted onto it, the Duke of Devonshire, a very

decent local sporting an equally decent range of beers, but my tour leads you by these and round the corner into Lawrence Road, for the goal is the award-winning Lawrence Arms, and you would be foolish to miss this little nugget. It is the epitome of Southsea pubs, an unpretentious, street-corner community local with a stunning array of beers, cask and craft, and more ciders than is advised to consume at one sitting – in fact, July/August sees a cider festival where the normal array of nine+ is supplemented by more than....I was able to count. As well as Harvey's



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Best, six rotating cask ales are on offer, and if you can find nothing to excite you among these, there's a formidable array of keg, bottled and canned craft beers at more reasonable prices than you will find in Crafty Caverns. The wood-paneled L-shaped bar makes for a comfortable environment to enjoy them in, and the walls are adorned with photos of old Southsea, including a rather surreal one of a local windmill in a back street.

If you can tear yourself away from the Lawrence, and this is not easy, a short walk up the road brings you to the imposing Fawcett Inn with its handsome mock-Tudor elevations and witch's bonnet tower. Once again dominating a street corner, this large football-oriented local is one of the few on the tour which will supply you with food as well as a choice of four beers, including Hop Back Summer Lightning and the superb Titanic Plum Porter.



Just up the road is one of the many Fuller's houses in the area, unsurprisingly perched on a street corner, the Red, White and Blue, a sports bar local serving Pride and HSB, but let's pass on to the northernmost outpost of our perambulations, the Nell Gwynne. This late Victorian, former Brickwoods corner local is of note because it is a magnificent building with the familiar witch's bonnet tower – pub architecture just doesn't come much better than this. It's a popular local, especially with Saturday afternoon football fans, with a single, bare-boarded bar and bags of atmosphere. It's listed in WhatPub as only serving Doombah, but when I last visited, there was a range of cask beers,

An advertisement for The Red Lion Freshwater pub. The background is a photograph of the pub's exterior, a brick building with a prominent sign featuring a red lion on a black background. A church tower is visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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including a couple from local brewers Irving.

If your time and inclination allow you to venture northwards, some excellent pubs await you, like the Froddington, the superb Rose in June (surely one of the best pub names ever), Staggeringly Good Brewery (only open Thursdays to Saturdays), and many more.

However, we shall now turn southwards, passing another corner local Fuller's pub, the excellent Golden Eagle, which supplies the usual range of Fuller's beers, take the first left then right, and head down Francis Avenue to the Northcote Hotel which, believe it or not, is a street-corner local. Sometimes, in moments of profound reflection, I wonder that, if you laid all the Southsea street-corner pubs in a line, not only would it be very hard to find the doors, but you'd have more pubs than Ei could shut down in a month.



I love the Northcote. It's not smart, it's not trendy and it's a bit frayed around the edges, but it has a delightful and atmospheric interior which makes you feel as though you've been coming here all your life. Its graceful Victorian charm isn't contrived, and you'll even find Sherlock Holmes (yes, I know he was Edwardian) memorabilia adorning the walls. You feel you could pardon such a fine pub for a disappointing range of beers, but you don't need to – there are five cask beers on offer, including Irving, Timothy Taylor's and the excellent Long Man APA. Not a bad selection for an off-piste local, though, of course, not too remarkable in an area rich with brilliant boozers.

In days gone by, the pre-eminent apogee of a run-ashore to Southsea was the magnificently-formed Leopold. It's still there, standing there on the corner of Leopold Street in its fine overcoat of glazed green tiles, looking as sexy as ever. But the good news stops at the threshold; the Leopold is yet another

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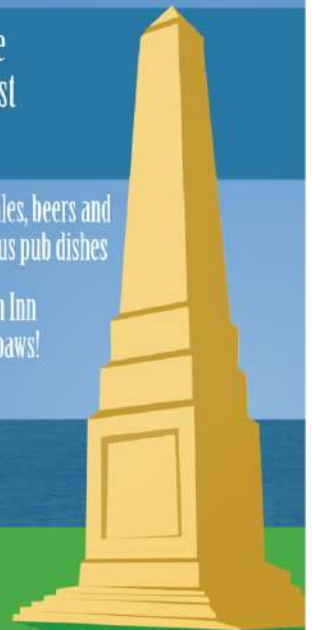
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casualty of the Ei business model (if a pub is well run and turns a good profit, in spite of Ei, they want most of it), and is currently but a pale green shadow of its former glory. The good news is that the former licensee has decamped across the road and opened up the superb Merchant House craft beer bar, and it is a very good establishment indeed. It's more a craft bistro than a pub, and it aims itself squarely at the younger drinker, but, hey, we can all pretend. To supplement the four ever-changing cask beers are a plethora of draught, canned and bottled crafts, many of which carry a typically crafty price tag – a round of four beers can set you back the best part of twenty quid. You'll get quality, but don't expect it to come cheap; for that you need to retrace your steps to the Lawrence Arms and its affordable crafts.



There's one more pub left on this tour, and that is a short bus ride or a long walk distant, depending on whether that extra satisfaction (or lesser guilt) which arises from activity outweighs your lust for beer. Or maybe your consciousness of that Ernest Smith clock ticking away the minutes to the next ferry. Whichever is true, your destination should be the Sir Loin of Beef along Highland Road in the precincts of Eastney, whose delights far outweigh its dreadful titular pun (anecdotally, but mythically, attributed to James 1st, ennoblement of a particularly good steak). Whether or not you think it should have retained its original, though rather less memorable, name of the Cambridge Arms is something you can mull over

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while you sample one of the six real ales on offer, among which you will always find at least one porter and one Titanic, sometimes combined in the form of Plum Porter. Despite its lack of architectural charm and idiosyncratic colour scheme, this is a popular local, with much charm, atmosphere and good beer, and one of the few pubs where you will often find the landlord behind the bar. Sadly, on my last visit there early in 2018, he was relishing the prospect of a well-earned retirement later in the year, so the future of this excellent boozier is uncertain.



If you've survived the tour up to this point, you will have earned a medal and a new liver, not necessarily in that order. Since you're in Eastney, there are other excellent hostelries nearby, like the Old House at Home and the Artillery Arms, which you can try before heading home. Indeed, there are plenty of other boozers in the Southsea area which I've not tried, so prolific is the choice, and there are several on my to-do list, like the Grade II listed Eastfield Hotel. Southsea certainly has cornered the popular street-corner local market, and it's worth reflecting that there was a time when that noble institution wasn't so rare as nowadays. I've no doubt that you, good reader, can add your own selections to my list, but the one thing you can be assured of is that your ferry fare will not be wasted, and you'll have walked a sufficient distance to deserve that extra couple of pints. Good walking, good hunting and good drinking!

Brian Jacobs

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Unusually the church is dedicated to two saints, both named Thomas, so its correct title is the Church of Saints Thomas.

The foundation stone of the present building was laid by the Prince Consort in 1854. When the church was consecrated the name of St. Thomas the Apostle was chosen as the patron saint but at a later date a decision was made to have the name of the murdered St Thomas a Becket included.

Among the many interesting artefacts inside the church is the tomb of Sir Edward Horsey who was Captain of the Isle of Wight at the time of the

Spanish Armada. He died of the plague which hit the Island in 1582. The monument to commemorate Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles 1st, who died in Carisbrooke Castle was commissioned by Queen Victoria, who thought an earlier tomb unsuited to a royal burial.

For centuries the church has witnessed changes in the life of Newport and civic ceremonies are carried out here to this day.

Rob Marshall

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or email - editor@wightwash.org.uk

- 1/ On the London Underground map, what colour is the Northern Line?
- 2/ Who played President Jed Bartlett in the tv series West Wing?
- 3/ Bobby Elliot was the drummer with which 60s pop group?
- 4/ Which guitar manufacturer invented the Stratocaster and the Precision Bass?
- 5/ Which musical instrument is also the name for a champagne glass?
- 6/ Which brewery makes Owd Roger?
- 7/ In which country would you find the Murray River?
- 8/ What do sailors call what landlubbers call a "ceiling"?
- 9/ and 10/ Identify these two South Coast cities/towns.



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Answers to the Autumn Quiz

- 1/ The Hovercraft
- 2/ Acute
- 3/ Victor Hugo
- 4/ Mervyn King
- 5/ Chickens
- 6/ Carousel
- 7/ Ireland
- 8/ Cherries
- 9/ Harold Wilson (**Baron** Wilson of Rievaulx)
- 10/ Sir Alec Douglas-Home

Justin Lake of Totland wins a meal voucher and Peter Gowers of Ryde wins a case of Yates' beer.

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

Diary Dates

22nd March - **Branch Walkabout** - start Solent 8pm (Simeon, Railway, Star, King Lud etc.)

10th April - **Pub and Beer of the Year Presentations** - Railway, Ryde 7pm

13th - 22nd April - **Beer Festival** - Dairyman's Daughter, Arreton

18th - 21st April - **Easter Beer Festival** - Solent, Ryde

19th - 21st April - **Easter Ale Festival** - Castle Inn, Sandown

19th - 21st April - **Beer Festival** (20 ales) Railway, Ryde

26th April - **Branch Meeting** - Wight Mouse, Chale 8pm

4th - 6th May - **Gin & Ale Festival** - Crown Inn, Shorwell

4th - 6th May - **Real Ale Festival** - Havenstreet Steam Railway

5th May - **Isle of Wight Randonnee** www.cycleisland.co.uk

11th May - **Wolverton Folk and Blues Fair** - www.folkandblues.org.uk

28th May - 2nd June - **Island Jazz Weekend** - various venues around Newport
www.iwjazzweekend.co.uk

13th - 16th June - **Isle of Wight Festival** - isleofwightfestival.com

5th - 7th July - **Highdown Beer Festival** - Highdown Inn, Totland

12th & 13th October **Isle of Wight Classic Buses, Beer and Walks Weekend**

www.wightwash.org.uk

Number One (again!)

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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