

FREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREEFREE

# Wightwash



Newsletter of the Isle of Wightbranch of CAMRA

## WINTER '99 ISSUE

### Island pub is to reopen

and an Island brewer is to brew beer in it.

David Yates (ex-Burts) has rented a cottage in the ground of the **St Lawrence Inn** and is in the process of installing a micro-brewery. The St Lawrence Inn is about to open it's doors again, possibly even as soon as Christmas. Plans have been passed and now new landlord Jamie Collins is nearing completion of his alterations.

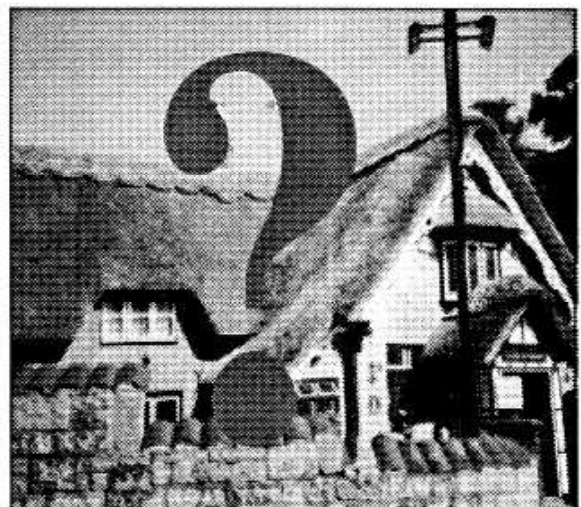
Although the previous bars are now accommodation, a new "long bar" is being created at a lower level. The intended opening for the Island's first brew pub since . . . (well, you tell us) will be January/February, however Jamie is considennng opening the pub for a few days over the Xmas/New Year period.



### REPRINT ORDERED FOR PUB BOOK

Island Author **Kevin Michell** has ordered a second print run of his definitive history of the inns, and ale houses of Newport.

"**Newport Pubs**" should be available in the shops in time for Christmas together with Kevin's earlier book "**Ryde Pubs**".



If you are reading this in a pub, please leave after you have finished for others to enjoy

## From Ken Matthews -Branch Treasurer and Regional Secretary

The Isle of Wight branch of the Campaign for Real Ale was formed in the early seventies. After several strong years, many of the stalwarts went to that great cellar in the sky leaving few with the time to participate in the day to day running of the branch. 1991 saw the re launch and membership has grown to 107 members. It is worth mentioning that the Isle of Wight has the highest percentage of members per capita in the whole of the United Kingdom and with a turnout of 28 for the last AGM, that was also a record for percentage of local membership.

Enough of the past. Unlike so many other organisations, we need to drag the membership out, not only for the AGM but for all the other events. Being a member of CAMRA isn't just a matter of paying your annual fee and receiving the best beer drinkers magazine on the market - "*What's Brewing*", delivered free to your door every month.

1. We need workers, members who are prepared to survey pubs for the Good Beer Guide, for the local guide and carry out price surveys when required.
2. We need members to attend meetings and socials. Socials are held bi-monthly from February and business meetings bi-monthly from January. Details are contained in *Wightwash*, come along and give it a try.
3. We need to raise funds. Organisations need money, stationery, printing, postage, meetings, advertising. Any funds are soon eroded unless there is a steady influx of cash.

August 98 saw the launch of the "*Isle of Wight Pub Guide*", the effort was daunting and many disappointments preceded the launch. The support from many of the Pubs allowed us to go to the Publishers with well over one thousand already pre sold. These sales were undertaken at the time of the survey, the really sad thing is that despite all the hard work, there are still many pubs that have not paid their bills, ask your local for one, at £3-50 it is a good read and we need the money. The IW Tourist Board has given tremendous support and well over 1,000 have been sold nationally, giving free advertising for the Island Pubs.

Join the fight, pick up a membership form and become part of the 50,000 nationwide.

**FOR BRANCH DIARY SEE PAGE 11**

**VENTNOR  
BREWERY**



SINCE 1840

**NOW AVAILABLE**

**YOUR CHOICE OF THE FIVE VENTNOR BREWERY  
DRAFT BEERS IN 35 PINT CUBITAINERS**

**ONLY £40**

**ALSO AVAILABLE**

**THE FULL RANGE OF THE SEVEN BOTTLED BEERS**

**CHRISTMAS ORDERS NOW BEING TAKEN  
FOR DETAILS AND TO PLACE ORDERS**

**PHONE 856161**

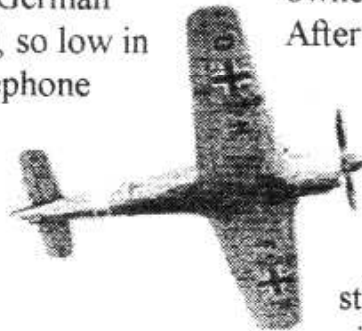
**WANTED**

**BURTS**

memorabilia  
phone

Barry Morton  
01293 541628

**On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January 1943** at 10 past 5 o'clock in the afternoon, two German Fighter- Bombers flew in at sea level, so low in fact that one of them severed the telephone wires, and dropped two 500kg bombs on Ventnor. One bomb demolished several residential and business properties including at least one hotel and caused varying degrees of damage to over 200 other buildings. The other cut through the gable of St. Boniface Villa, ricocheted onto the back of Crawfords Radio shop and then exploded on the lawn of the house next to **Burts** brewery. The Ventnor Rescue Party received a call for assistance at 5.20. They arrived on the scene 10 minutes later. This delay, for which they were later held to account was blamed on the broken telephone line. At 10 o'clock help arrived from Shanklin and Ryde, and later, from Newport. Rescue work continued through the night and final drew to a close just after noon the next day. Amongst the seven



killed in the raid was the brewery owner William (Bill) Arthur Phillips. After the war, the brewery was rebuilt by H.Pontifex and Sons under the supervision of William (also known as "Bill") Barnes Austin (father of the famous beer guru Peter Austin). Although much of this equipment still remains, it is now just a museum piece. In 1992 Burts was bought by former soft drinks tycoon Geoffrey Hartridge who, for a while, transferred the brewing operation to Newport. Only one Burts beer, "Nipper" is still in existence, but this is now brewed in Trowbridge. The site is now occupied by the small **Ventnor Brewery**, who still enjoy the right to tap up to six million gallons Ventnor Spring water for next to nothing and, according to some, still operate under the watchful eye of Bill Phillips, whose face, it is said, can occasionally be seen looking out of the window of the old labelling room.

## Ventnor Brewery

For a small brewery "operating on a shoe string" according to owner Bob Simpson, **Ventnor Brewery** turn out an commendable variety of draught and bottled ales. Their established beers are:-  
**Ventnor Golden Bitter** 4% abv  
**Ventnor Kangaroo Bitter** 4.8% abv  
**Ventnor Traditional Oyster Stout** 4.5% abv  
**Ventnor Sunfire Bitter** 4.3% abv  
 All available in bottles and draught.

They will soon be joined by :-  
**Sandrock** - a smoked beer, named after the Niton hotel that mysteriously caught fire - and  
**Wight Spirit** - still being perfected by brewer Xavier Baker. This will be a very hoppy brew at around 5% abv

Following a display at the "Food Lovers Fair" Covent Garden, they have been invited to exhibit their wares at "Taste 2000" at the London Design Centre, "Countryside Live" in Syon Park and together with Fullers, Shepherd Neame, Caledonian and Wychwood "The BBC Good Food Show" at the NEC Birmingham representing the countries "top independent brewers".

Part of the brewery buildings are currently being turned into an off-licence which will stock between 50 and 70 mainly bottled conditioned bottled beers. It is hoped that it will open in time for Xmas.



**All Smiles at the Steam Up**



Isle of Wight CAMRA Chairman, John Nicholson is pictured here at the 25<sup>th</sup> Island Steam Extravaganza presenting Tony French, a representative of the Isle of Wight Steam railway, a contributive cheque of £50 in appreciation of their efforts to promote the Campaign

**Hulverstone** could soon get it's pub back.. **The Sun** is back on the market, but can anyone afford it?

**Ushhhhhers!**

Wraps are being kept on the reorganisation of the **Ushers** Estate. Several pubs will revert from being managed houses to tenancies.

Watch this space or check out our website

Our branch website contains news, features and is linked to several Island pubs.

Check it out at:

[www.nickoakdene.demon.co.uk/camera](http://www.nickoakdene.demon.co.uk/camera)

More unexplained goings-on at **Ventnor Brewery.**

Investigating a leak during cleaning, brewer Xavier Baker discovered that four large bolts holding heat transfer plates together had been unexplainedly loosened. This follows an episode earlier this year when Ventnor Brewery undertook to store a pallet of cider belonging to their trading partner Godshill Cider Barn. During the night some unseen hand hurled several flagons of cider across the brewery floor.

**Ushers** winter beer will be "**Winter Storm**" a black beer with a chocolate background and a dash of malt whisky. **Bishops Tipple** will also be widely available.

**Hall and Woodhouse** are countering with "**New Timer**" a dark beer with a hint of ginger, Nice pumpclip!

**THE  
BADGER SET.**

FIRST GLIMPSED DEEP IN THE HEART OF DORSET, THESE THREE GLORIOUS BADGER VARIETIES CAN NOW BE FOUND COUNTRYWIDE.

**Whitbreads** have finished the second phase of their capital development of the **Woodvale** in Gurnard., adding five en-suite letting rooms to the top floor. The middle floor now has a new bar and dining area with access to the balcony overlooking the Solent. This can double as a function room..

Keith and Cherry Terrell have sold the lease on the **Crab and Lobster** in Bembridge to local brothers Adrian and Richard Allan and have bought the lease on the **Moulin Rouge** bringing their culinary skills to the centre of **Newport**.

**The Hogshead**, Newport are planning a "Month of Fundays" for December including a **Wadsworths 6X** promotion on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The beer of the month is currently **Youngs Special** available in "4 for the price of 3" jugs. Following a national tend, the pub will be closed for a New Years Eve Private Party - tickets £10.

After fighting a gallant losing battle to keep the **Star Inn** in East Cowes from becoming a car park, landlord Mick Quinn has now taken over the **King Lud**, Ryde; and by all accounts serving a jolly fine pint.

**Jonathon Stancill** (the brewer that set **Goddard's** on their road to success) played host to several Island members when he showed them round his new home - Timothy Taylor's brewery at Keighley. Chairman John Nicholson was not impressed with the Yorkshire pubs - "Too many fag smokers and swan necks"

A splendid time was had by all when Derry and Tina Derbyshire celebrated ten years at **The Crab**, Shanklin. Highlight of the evening was Tina's rendition of "Que Sera" backed by the bar staff and **The Mix**

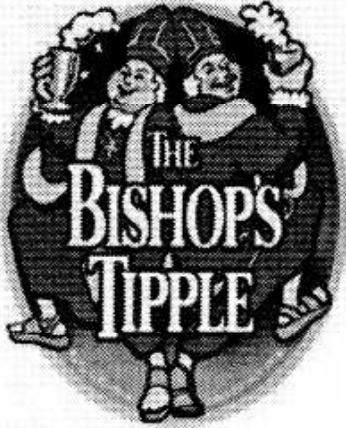
Andrew and Neil Gibbs who recently opened the hugely successful **Bargeman's Rest** in Newport are soon to add a third pub to their estate which also includes Ventnor's **Spyglass**. They have bought the Lincoln Hotel on Shanklin Esplanade which they will re-name "**The Steamer Inn**" and plan to open Easter 2000.

**A pat on the back** to staff at the **Anchor Inn**, Cowes who have removed all the sparklers from their hand pumps (but will dispense beer through one if asked). When they are busy, they say, it wastes time pointlessly squirting beer into a glass. And they frequently are busy. Is this a case of cause or effect?

The Anchor's landlord Chris Troop together with his business partner Tony Dudley are to take over **The Globe**, Cowes in January.

New landlords Paul and Kelly of the **White Lion** at Arreton have resumed the pub's popular quiz nights on alternate Sundays.

LANDLORDS, IF YOU WANT US TO MENTION ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR PUB, JUST TELL US - IT'S FREE! Phone *Wightwash* on 721557 by 1<sup>st</sup> February for next issue)

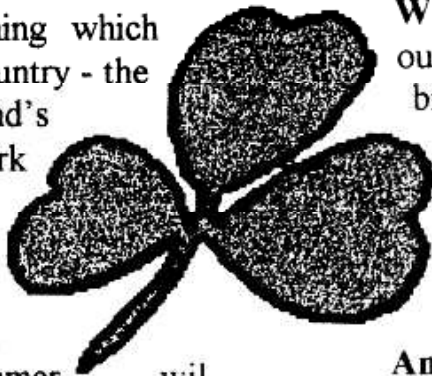


A Classic strong beer with a golden amber hue, delightful hop aroma and smooth fruity flavour.

Available from Ushers 01225-715254 and leading wholesalers.

## Porterhouse Blues?

Ireland is a lovely country and its people are amongst the friendliest in the world. There is just one thing which detracts from a visit to that country - the choice of beer. The fate of Ireland's breweries stands as a stark warning of what might have happened here, without the real ale revolution. A market dominated by one company, which dictates what the consumer will drink and ensures compliance by massive spending on advertising. Guinness is alright, just not very interesting and the recent trend towards chilling it to mouth-numbing temperatures removes what little taste there was. The alternatives are no better - a case of the bland leading the bland. So news of a new brewery in Dublin, specialising in porters and stouts, was welcome indeed.



**The Porterhouse** in Parliament Street is like an O'Wetherspoons, with multi-levels, good food, an enormous choice of beers, but with live music and a very Irish feel. Eight beers are brewed on the premises: Plain Porter, Porterhouse Red, Oyster Stout, Wrasslers Stout, Hersbrucker and Brain Blasta, Chiller and Temple Brau.

**Plain Porter** (4.3%) is what Guinness ought to be: a light stout, but with real rich roast flavour and aroma. It has won several awards.

**Porterhouse Red** (4.4%) is a traditional Irish Ale, which in the words of Michael Jackson "Makes Caffreys taste like Tizer".

**The Oyster Stout** (4.8%) is interesting, but the

**Wrasslers Stout** (5%) is really outstanding, really full flavoured and bitter. It has also won several medals.

**The Hersbrucker** (5%) is certainly better than the mass market lagers, but not in the same league as "Real" lagers from the small German brewers.

**An Brain Blasta** (7%) was also a bit of a disappointment. Strong, certainly, but with a rather harsh bitterness, without the rounded flavour of an English strong ale like Old Thumper.

Admittedly the enjoyment of the last two beers was somewhat spoilt by the high carbonation and slightly low temperature (all the beers are served under gas). So, definitely worth a visit and a welcome relief from the universal blandness of the mass-produced Irish stouts, there is also a vast selection of bottled beers from all over the world, but not utopia. Several other microbreweries have been set up in Ireland, with equipment from the same supplier, Thompson & Dobbin. Dwans Brewing in Tipperary, Biddy Early Brewing Company, Inagh, Clare and Messrs Maguire, O'Connell Bridge, Dublin, opening soon. So things are looking up.

*Nick Ward*





In our last issue we published a letter from a self confessed lager drinker signing himself/herself "McKinnel". To pen a suitable reply, we tracked down Professor Ullage, then residing in Cumbria.

### **The Effects of Lager Drinking on the Causation and Treatment of Piles**

By Prof. I P A Ullage – Enematic Professor of Supplied Appliances, University of Cockermonth, Cumbria

I first became aware of the links between the consumption of lager and piles whilst undergoing my training as a Junior Doctor. A colleague of mine, in an attempt to avoid having alcohol on his breath whilst doing his rounds, devised an ingenious solution - the self-administered Heineken enema. Now, as a Real Ale man, I must concede that this is probably the best way of ingesting the stuff; at least you don't have to taste it! However, the poor fellow rapidly went on to develop a large collection of very painful piles.

Now, you might think that there is a considerable difference between ingesting lager through the anus and pouring it down past the tonsils. Not so; referring to the work of Peri Ytonitis and Stulis Fermis, et al, University of Athens BMJ3-86, I quote: 'after extensive chemical analysis, the lager in question was found to contain 5% Amphoteric surfactant, 6% Nontionic surfactant, 15% Antionic surfactant' – in fact not so different to Fairy Liquid, hence the clean taste that Mr M<sup>c</sup>Kinnel refers to in Wightwash 8-99. For the effect of all these surfactants covered with the iron content in lager (at least Iron Bru are semi-half honest) would be to spring clean the bowel's mucus lining out of existence, and replace it with copious quantities of rusty red piles!!!

As we can see, the outlook for the average lager drinker is dire, what's more, the treatment for lager induced piles is equally bleak. The problem being in involuntary expellation of suppositories, caused by the CO<sub>2</sub> induced flatulence prevalent in lager drinkers. This was amply demonstrated by Wynd and Schmeling, et al, Pilsen Institute BMJ6-97. In a double blind trial, using, both, beer and lager drinkers, Wynd and Schmeling attached anemometers to the rectums of both groups.

Mean average wind speed of the lager drinkers was Storm Force 10, on the Beaufort Scale, causing the piles to vibrate violently and bend at an angle of 45 degrees. With beer drinkers, however, the piles fluttered soothingly in a gentle Force 2. More importantly, at least to larger drinkers, was the Anal Muzzle Velocity (AMV) of 20 meters per second. This caused the underpants to totally disintegrate under the impact of a 35mm suppository, as well as causing severe collateral damage to the seat of the trousers.

So, to sum up, do you still want to drink *lager* Mr/ Ms/ Miss M<sup>c</sup>Kinnel?!!!!

We invite McKinnel to reply, but ask him not to lower the tone of this page - if that were at all possible.

Win a case of **Ventnor Brewery's** award winning **Oyster Stout**  
in our

## **GRAND CHRISTMAS PICTURE QUIZ**

Yes, of course you recognised the Crab on the cover, but how about these?  
First correct answers out of the hat on 10<sup>th</sup> January win the beer.

Send answers to Wightwash, Oakdene,  
Rookley, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 3NH



Photo 1

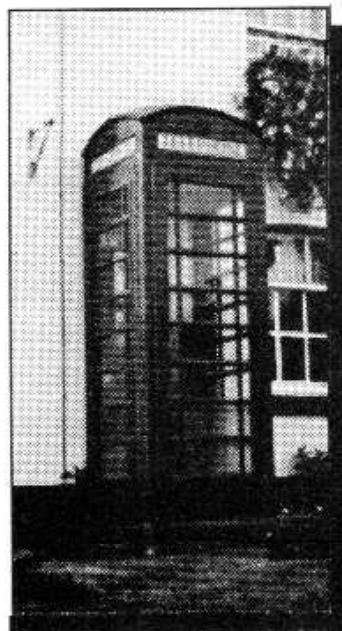


Photo 4

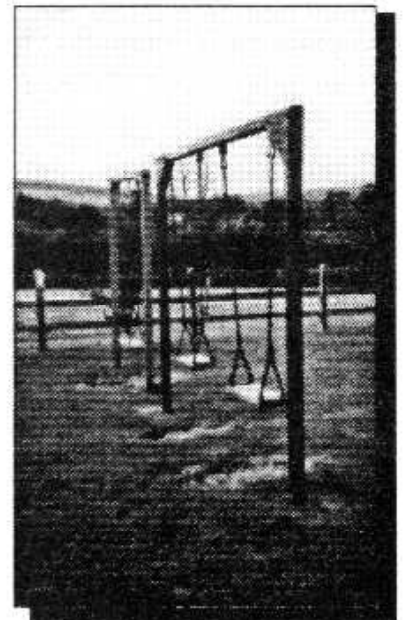


Photo 5

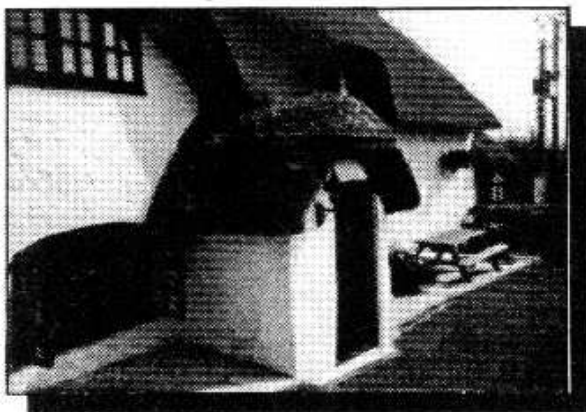


Photo 2

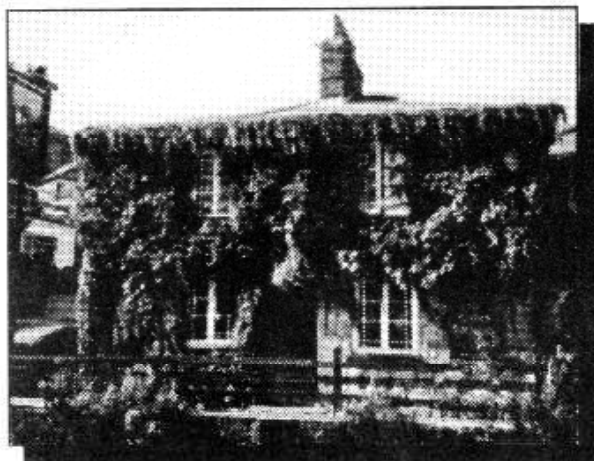


Photo 3

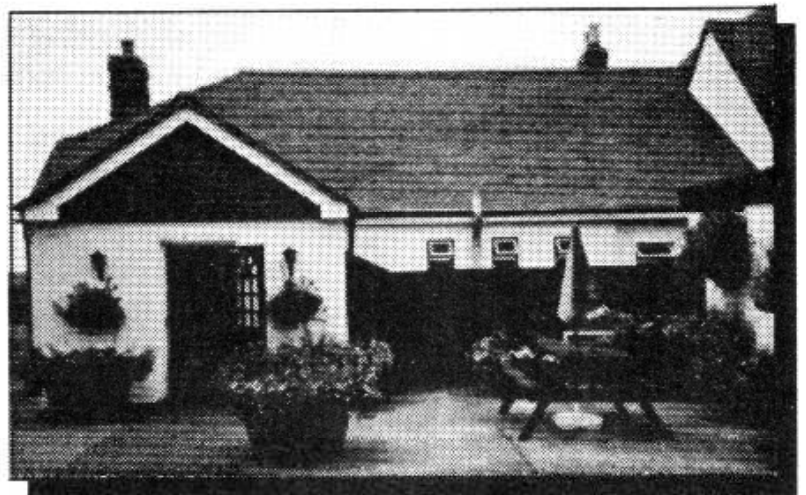


Photo 6



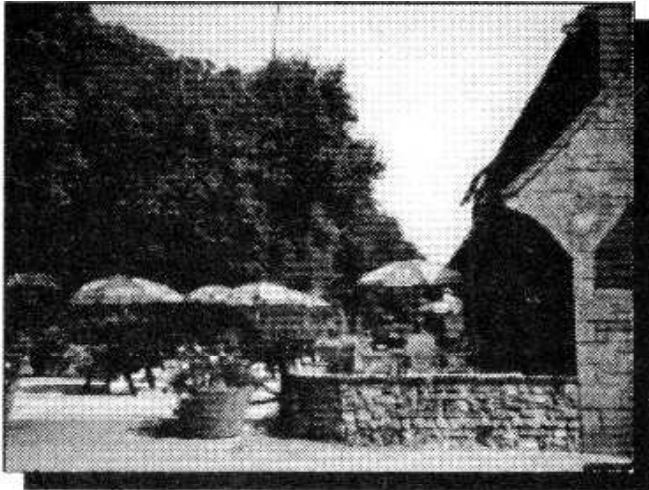


Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10

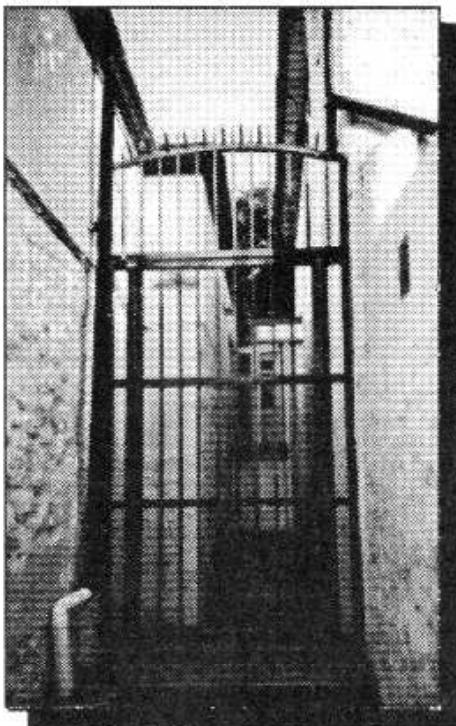


Photo 11



Photo 12

## ROUND THE PUBS IN WEST WIGHT

by our West Wight Correspondent Brian Snellgrove

FRESHWATER

**Prince of Wales** - a friendly comer pub like the old beer house - 3 real ales including Ringwood '49, limited good food. **The Vine** a busy town centre pub with further alterations planned, good Gales beers. **Red Lion** - a busy pub with excellent and varied menu and 3 real ales including London Pride - a popular and attractive venue. **The Royal Standard** now in fresh hands - when the two ladies get to grips perhaps the beer quality will improve "take Courage" as they used to advertise and it has sometimes been needed - an old-fashioned small town hotel.

FRESHWATER BAY

**Sandpipers** - The Fat Cat Bars are small but welcoming with always at least 3 varying real ales - a favourite spot for evening meals. **The Albion** - recently changed hands though all else remains mediocre in spite of it being one of the island's finest sites.

TOTLAND

**The Waterfront** - an increasingly popular place with glorious views and sunsets food is good with attentive staff and there is one real ale (a lot of visitors like John Smith's). **Colwell Bay Inn** - since their arrival Gail and Beverley have made the Inn most attractive and there is a wide menu all day - three real ales including Greene King Abbott - occasional staff shortages have been noted. **The Broadway** - recent changes have made some improvement and hopefully things are improving - there is normally one real ale available, usually Flowers. **The Highdown** -

always popular with locals and visitors especially when walking the Downs -good Ushers ales and a much frequented eating place - not easy to direct strangers (mind the coaches!)

YARMOUTH

**The Bugle** - a very old and comfortable pub in the centre of Yarmouth - fairly recently changed hands but we gather more support from management might help. On our last visit 4 beers were off but with a long cellar run things are not easy. Three real ales including Old Speckled Hen. Good food but on a visit last year upstairs left something to be desired. **The Wheatsheaf** - a busy and well-run pub with extensive menu and three real ales including Fuggle-de-dum - probably the best pub in Yarmouth though none can afford to drop behind. **The Kings Head** - another quite large pub with good beers and food. Like all the town's pubs it is rather dark with secluded corners. A busy place. This leaves **The George** which is a very well known Hotel going back a long way. Although not visited this time round it is comfortable but alas no real ale - always a bit pricey but this does not keep people away.

Went for a grand trip on The **P.S.Waverly** the other day with a rail trip to Corfe Castle from Swanage. Obviously they cannot carry real ales but Calders Best from Alloa was a very tolerable beer.

Brian Snellgrove

BE A *Wightwash* CORRESPONDANT. E-MAIL ME AT [tim@nickoakdene.demon.co.uk](mailto:tim@nickoakdene.demon.co.uk) or drop me a line - Tim Marshall, Oakdene, Rookley, Ventnor. PO38 3NH or phone - 721557

**Ventnor** may seem to be a long way from anywhere but Bonchurch but, for the beer drinker, the Ventnor festival, held at the end of October each year is a path worth treading. An eight seater minibus left the Travellers, (organised as always by Nick Ward) with the usual party of revellers – (these are the ones that go to the social evening wherever it is held), and collected the Newport contingent. Unfortunately there would have been more if Nick had catered for those who didn't know at 4pm whether they would be going or not, be warned! He who hesitates is lost. We started at the "Volunteer" and as always the range of beer was extensive and quality superb. After an hour we moved onto the "Crab and Lobster Tap" in Grove Road, what a superb pub this is, good beer, good range and the first tasting of Goddards "Ducks Folly" an anagram of !!?. For last orders we moved to the "Spyglass Inn", some fine music and a good end to the evening. - BUZZY

### Where to get Island beers

#### Goddards

COWES; Anchor Inn, Cowes; Duke of York, Travellers Joy. SEAVIEW: Seaview Hotel.  
BEMBRIDGE: Crab and Lobster. CARISBROOKE: Blacksmiths Arms, PONDWELL: Wishing Well. YARMOUTH: Bugle Hotel, Wheatsheaf. WOOTTON: Fleming Arms. VENTNOR; Crab and Lobster Tap. FRESHWATER; Red Lion, Albion Hotel.

#### Ventnor Brewery

SHANKLIN: Falcon, Chine. BEMBRIDGE: Birdham, Row Barge. WHITWELL: White Horse.  
RYDE: Wetherspoons, High Park Tavern, Battery, Lake Huron, Yelfs, GODSHILL: Griffin.  
SANDOWN: Caulkheads, Parkbury Hotel, Tap, Castle, Rugby Club. WROXALL: 4 Seasons.  
GURNARD: Woodvale, Portland, Travellers Joy. COWES: Three Crowns, Vectis Tavern.  
NEWPORT: Bargemans Rest. EAST COWES: Prince of Wales. ARRETON: Arreton Barn.  
BEMBRIDGE: Birdham, Rowbarge. FRESHWATER: Sandpipers. YARMOUTH: Bugle.  
CARISBROOKE: Blacksmiths Arms. NITON: White Lion, Buddle.  
SHALFLEET: New Inn, House & Groom. VENTNOR: Bell Bar, Central Tap, Lansdown Arms, Bleinheim, Volunteer.

### Pubs with Fires

Bonchurch Inn, Bonchurch; Countryman, Brighstone; Blacksmiths Arms, Calbourne; Railway Medina, Newport; Wight Mouse, Chale; Anchor Inn, Cowes; Kingston Arms, Cowes; Woodvale Hotel, Gurnard; Prince of Wales, Newport; White Lion, Niton; Red Lion, Freshwater; Highdown, Totland; Travellers Joy, Northwood; Chequers Inn, Rookley; Hole in the Wall, Ryde; New Inn, Shalfleet; Volunteer, Ventnor; Wheatsheaf, Yarmouth.

### Branch Diary

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December **Blacksmiths Arms** Christmas Party  
(Phone Sarah Mills 758759 or John Nicholson 299436 for food booking)  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January AGM - See *What's Brewing* for venue**  
Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February **Travellers Joy** - Noon- Wessex Regional Meeting  
Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February **Castle, Sandown** - 8.30 pm - Social and Walk-about  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March **Cedars, Wootton** - 8.30 pm - Business Meeting



and for those of you who unlucky enough not to make it down to the pub -

### A Survey of Bottled Beers Available on the Isle of Wight

When the editor asked me to prepare an article about the bottle-conditioned beers available locally, I thought I would struggle to fill a page without some review of pasteurised bottled beers. However, thanks to those enlightened folk at **Bottoms Up** in Newport, whose current range of bottled conditioned beers is nothing short of astonishing, I now find myself in the opposite situation. The problem is, where do I start, and will I be sober enough to finish?

I suppose the first question you're going to ask is 'Where's the best place to buy bottle conditioned beer?' Well, **Tesco** has for a long time been a good source, and still is, but they've been usurped in the BCA stakes by **Bottoms Up**, who don't stock as many lines as Tesco, but are definite leaders for bottle-conditioned ales (BCAs). Also, **Safeway** at Newport is now snapping at Tesco's heels with some quite interesting indigenous and foreign BCAs. With the limited column inches available to me, let me just say that their finest offering is **Freeminer Trafalgar Ale** at £1.79 a bottle. At 5.5%, this is a true IPA; astringently hoppy, and with a full-bodied malty palate; the flavour is wonderful. The only problem is that its quality is extremely variable; however carefully you pour the beer, you cannot avoid sediment, the conditioning is unreliable, and one that a friend poured closely resembled the contents of a septic tank. A similar, but more consistent, ale currently available from Safeway is **Shepherd Neame Christmas Ale** (£1.99).

My favourite BCA from Tesco is **Fullers 1845**. At 6.3%, this mighty ale tastes as its strength would suggest - very full bodied, fruity and almost vinous, with a powerful punch of hops. Tesco do stock several other BCAs which I have found pleasant, but not particularly memorable. **Bottoms Up**, on the other hand, have such a vast choice of quality BCAs that I haven't had the time to try them all. Of those I have sampled, **Old Slug Porter** from RCH was a delightful example of a true porter - rich, full-bodied and full of liquoricy flavours. **Fanfare** (4.5%) from Tisbury is a light spring ale; its chief characteristic is a powerful hop flavour which arises from adding hops late in the boil. It is almost identical in taste to one of my favourite Belgian beers, **Hommel**, which literally means 'hop'. The magnificent **Shakemantle** from Freeminer at 6% is the most powerful ginger beer I've tried; apart from being as full-bodied as its strength might suggest, it has a wonderfully powerful smack of ginger. However, top place of all the BCAs I tried must go to the magnificent 6% **Ale Mary** (£1.69), also from RCH, which is such a wonderful beer that I'd like it to have my baby. It is a consummate spiced beer, full of cinnamon, coriander, and lots of other things I can only guess at - a perfect drink for a winter evening, especially if you shove a red hot poker in it (oh, do stop sniggering at the back).

Although not within the scope of this article, before concluding, I must mention a couple of brewery-conditioned bottled beers I've tried recently. **Chris Coleman** has greatly improved the bottled version of **Fuggle-de Dum** - it's now much smoother, and far more like its draught counterpart. Also, **Usher** produce a range of bottled beer, including three named to appeal to wine buffs - **Red**, **White** and **Tawny**. I have only had opportunity to try the white (the favourite of the three in a **What's Brewing** tasting), but it is a most unusual beer with a floral aroma and palate, like a cross between an elderflower beer and **Liebrfraumilch**; imagine that, if you can! It really is a delightful beer and well worth a try.

This is a small selection of what's around at the moment. No doubt many seasonal ales will have made an appearance by the time you read this, so, as long as your wallet and liver can stand it, try the lot!

**Brian Jacobs**



## THE SHELF LIFE OF BEER

Making it Last

Beer for commercial bottling can be treated to improve its stability (shelf life). Three main methods are used and all three usually start with the filtration of the rough beer.

**The first** and simplest method entails the beer being passed through a suitable filter to remove the yeast, suspended solids and non-sterile matter then carbonation followed by bottling. This beer receives no further treatment and preserves much of the flavour and aroma that were present prior to treatment and is known as sterile filtered beer. This process gives a medium shelf life of up to one year and can be used for bottled and keg beers.

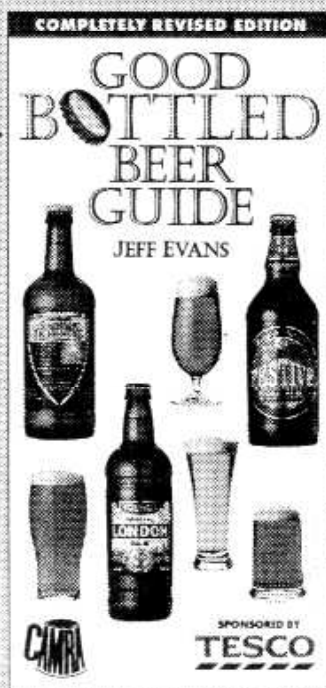
**A similar method** to the above includes the filtration followed by pasteurisation, a process where the beer is heated to a certain temperature for a certain time to kill off any remaining non-sterile matter. The pasteurisation process does tend to alter the flavour of the beer and may leave it somewhat bland. The resultant product has the advantage of an extremely long shelf life of up to one year and beyond. It is used for canned, keg and bottled beers.

**The third method** follows the sterile filtering process but without carbonation. Carbonation is provided by the addition of a fresh charge of yeast that ferments in the bottle. These beers are as near to cask ale as you can get, as the desirable attributes of the yeast are present in the finished product.

The lower strength products of around 3.5- 4.5% ABV do not enjoy a particularly long shelf life of around 6 months but their stronger brothers in the 10-14% range can be laid down like fine wines and kept for years.

Chris Coleman  
Head Brewer Goddards

The choice of bottle-conditioned beers is now staggering and CAMRA Books has the whole field covered in the new edition of the award-winning Good Bottled Beer Guide. Now in a handy, pocket-hardback format, the book profiles all bottle conditioned beers currently available in the UK, and includes features on



storing, serving and tasting bottled beers, plus a survey of easy-to-find bottled real ales from overseas. Compiled by Jeff Evans, eight times Editor of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, the Good Bottled Beer Guide is priced £8.99 (£7.99 to CAMRA members) and is available from good bookshops or direct (and post-free) from CAMRA at 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans AL1 4LW; tel. (01727) 867201 (credit card orders accepted).

We are frequently reminded that CAMRA is a "**campaign not a club**" so it's full marks to Island member Ernie Frost who let it be known that the closure of the Courage Brewery in Bristol by Scottish Courage has not gone unnoticed.

Here are some extracts from both his letter to Tom Ward, Managing Director of Scottish Courage and the reply:

**Dear Mr Ward,**

"As a regular drinker of Courage Best and occasionally Directors I read with some distress of the proposed closure of the brewery at Bristol. Does this mean that Best and Directors will disappear into history, or will an attempt be made to brew the Beers at another of your breweries; How do you propose to retain the same taste and character?"

I am bombarded by advertising in various media for some of your other products yet I see next to no advertising for the Courage products. I have to wonder what sales would be like if the Courage beers had an equivalent advertising budget to John Smiths.

I seem to remember reading in 1996 a promise that the brewery would be safe with Scottish and Newcastle, do you have any comment on this?"

**Dear Mr Frost,**

"The Courage Bristol Brewery has a long and proud history. Our decision that it must close has been reached with great sadness.

Apart from Bristol, we have three other major breweries which also produce cask ale.. The other breweries have the facility to brew and package a wide range of different beers - but unfortunately , Bristol does not. We have considered the possibility of investment at Bristol to enable it to produce a wider range of beers but this cannot be justified.

Courage Best and Directors.... are important brands for us with a loyal following and we are determined that they should remain available without any change in flavour nor deterioration in quality. You have my word for that - and I do drink them regularly myself.

If I thought that some increased advertising spend would change all of this and lead to increased sales of our cask ales, I would be the first person in our business to argue for that, But we have found that market support has little impact on sales of cask ales.

You refer to a promise that the brewery would be safe with S&N. We have never given any commitment - either publicly or privately - that any of our breweries would remain open irrespective of market conditions. I am not sure that any brewer could ever do that. I am very sorry that we have come to this decision but we are doing everything possible to deal properly with the staff affected and help them find continuing employment. "

T R WARD Managing Director Brewing & logistics



Here are the answers to the quiz in our last issue:-

- 1/ The Worcester Cadet was the **Brighstone Lifeboat**.
- 2/ In a Merstone garden, there is a ship's air vent. It travelled to Dunkirk as part of the **Medway Queen**.
- 3/ Michael Morey's hump on which the unfortunate chap's body was hung in the gibbet, is near the **Hare and Hounds**.
- 4/ The roof of Appuldurcombe House was blown off by a **German landmine**.
- 5/ Lizzie and her friends are donkeys at **Carisbrooke Castle** where they bring water up from the well by means of a treadmill.
- 6/ The features of **The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh** are carved above the south door of St. Thomas' Church, Newport
- 7/ Charles Dickens was residing in **Bonchurch** during the time he wrote David Copperfield.
- 8/ **The Walmer Castle** in Ventnor was known as the Drum and Monkey (anyone know why?).
- 9/ The Devils Chimney is a fissure in the rocks between Shanklin and Ventnor.
- 10/ Egypt Point is the most northerly piont of the Isle of Wight and it is situated in **Cowes**
- 11/ **The Blacksmith's Arms** is the closest pub to Betty Haunt Lane.
- 12/ On **Cowes seafront** you can find the propeller of HMS Cavalier The fastest destroyer used in WWII.
- 13/ Hoare's Chine Brewery was in **Shanklin**.
- 14/ Valentine Grey was a child **chimney sweep**.
- 15/ Uffa fox is buried in **Whippingham Church**.

The winner of a box of etched bohemian crystal glasses from Piggy Wiggies of Shanklin was Mrs. Jenny Mew from Chale.



Join CAMRA and PROTECT YOUR PUBS & PINTS



Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Rates are Single £14 Joint £17 OAP's £8 (joint£11) Under 26 £8 (joint £11)

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post code.....

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

Signed..... Date.....

# HAVE A Merry Xmas

Let us take you home



SOUTHERN VECTIS  
THE ISLE OF WIGHT'S BUS, COACH AND HOLIDAY COMPANY  
CENTRAL INFORMATION LINE 827005



## Or Take a Taxi

### Shanklin

"A" Cabs	866772
Astax	864075
Wiltax	863401

### All Island Cover

Star Cars	520011
-----------	--------

1 - 8 seater taxis

### Sandown

Abbcabs	403204
Annards Taxis	402403

8 seater minibus available with  
wheelchair facility

### Ventnor

Timey's Taxi	853871
--------------	--------

also for Wroxall and Shanklin

Randalls Taxis	852269
----------------	--------

anytime anywhere including the  
mainland

### Cowes

Alpha Cars	280280
------------	--------

1 -8 seater taxi

Anywhere Taxis	281711
----------------	--------

### Newport

3 C's Private Hire	825029
--------------------	--------