

BeerPoint

BeerPoint is a system whereby members of the Isle of Wight branch of the Campaign for Real Ale can recommend pubs that they have recently visited and found the beer to be of a good standard.

The system is providing a useful tool in highlighting good (or bad) practice.

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

Here is a list of our current **Recommended BeerPoint** pubs by area:

North:

Traveller's Joy, Northwood; Anchor, Cowes; Union, Cowes; Fountain, Cowes; Portland, Gurnard; Lifeboat, East Cowes; White Hart, East Cowes; Kingston, Cowes.

East & North East:

Vine, St Helens; The Old Village Inn, Bembridge; Propeller, Bembridge; Simeon Arms, Ryde; Swan's Nest, Ryde; Castle, Ryde; Fowler & Co, Ryde; Lake Huron, Ryde; Solent, Ryde; Dark Horse, Brading; Yarbridge Inn, Brading.

Central:

White Lion, Arreton; Crown, Shorwell; Three Bishops, Brighstone; Chequers, Rookley; Griffin, Godshill; Taveners, Godshill; Four Seasons, Wroxall; Pointer Inn, Newchurch; Prince of Wales, Newport; Old Stag, Newport; Newport Ale House; William Coppin, Newport; Castle, Newport.

South and South East:

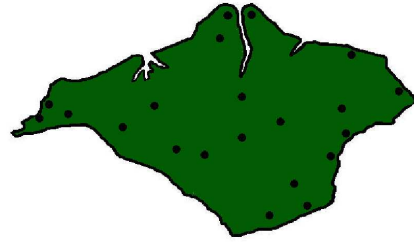
Buddle, Niton; Village Inn, Shanklin; Chine Inn, Shanklin; King Harry's, Shanklin; Waterfront, Shanklin; Crab and Lobster Tap, Ventnor; Volunteer, Ventnor; White Lion, Niton; Castle Inn, Sandown; Tap, Sandown; White Horse, Whitwell.

West:

Prince of Wales, Freshwater; King's Head, Yarmouth; Sun, Calbourne; Sun, Hulverstone; Broadway, Totland; Horse and Groom, Ningwood; Vine, Freshwater.

Please check the website for an up-to-date list

www.wightwash.org.uk
and click on "BEER POINT"



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Function room available for all occasions

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 54

Newsletter of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA

Winter Issue 2012

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



Congratulations to Rob and Rachel Burrows licensees of The Pointer Inn,

Newchurch who have just won first prize in **Fuller's Pub of the Year** contest.

Anyone who has visited the pub will know the award is very well deserved.

Fuller company chairman, Michael Turner who presented the prize described the Pointer Inn as "a truly outstanding example of a pub at the heart of its surroundings".

Rob and Rachel took over The Pointer Inn on 24th May 2010 and featured as "New Faces" in the Summer 2010 issue of Wightwash.

(you can download back copies of Wightwash from the website

www.wightwash.org.uk)



Rob and Rachel

Also in this **FREE** issue:-

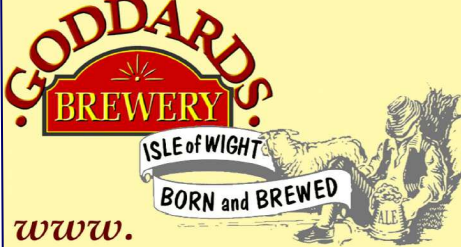
New Faces
POLICE PAGE

ISLAND LANDMARKS

PRIZE QUIZ

Letter to the Editor

CAMPAIGNING ISSUES
and much more...



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PUB AND BEER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Yes folks, it's that time of the year again. You should have received a voting form with this copy of Wightwash, one per member. If you didn't please let us know by phoning Gary Daish (07853 425 622) or sending me an email editor@wightwash.org.uk

I would appeal to ALL members to partake. The competition is our chance to give all deserving landlords a pat on the back. Even if they aren't winners, a vote shows someone cares.

There are about 170 pubs on the Isle of Wight and many of them are first class. Now we don't expect you all to conduct your own personal survey of all 170 (although please go ahead if you think you must). All we want you to do is let us know what your three favourite pubs are and list them in order. (And if you if you only have one, that's okay too.)

We would also like you to tell us what your favourite Isle of Wight beer is. To help you choose we have written a list, but please note the beer doesn't need to be on the list, it just has to be brewed on the Isle of Wight.

The results will be announced on John Hannam Meets on Isle of Wight Radio on Sunday 10th February and published in the Spring Issue of Wightwash.

Join CAMRA Today



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 4 LW



Rates are Single £25 Partner at same address £30 Under 26 & Over 60 £17.50 Partner at same address £20.50

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

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Win a £20 Meal Voucher for the Chequers Inn or a case of Yates' Ales

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

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

- 1/ In which country would you find the "Angel Falls"?
2/ Which former resident of Shide is credited with the invention of the seismograph?
3/ Which group had a hit with "Waterloo Sunset"?
4/ How many sides has a rhombus?
5/ Where in the body would you find the fibula?
6/ Who captained the winning 2012 Ryder Cup team?
7/ Which London theatre had the motto "We never close"?
8/ Which river runs through Cardiff?
9/ and 10/ Identify these two cruise lines

9/



10/



Answers to the Autumn Quiz

- 1/ McLaren 2/ Potato
3/ Major Gen. Martin White
4/ Rio de Janeiro 5/ Northumberland
6/ Issac Asimov
7/ Six 8/ Chicago
9/ Bass 10/ Shepherd Neame

Derek Nichol of East Cowes wins a £20 meal voucher and Liz Brammall of Brighstone wins a case of Yates' beers.

Thank you to all the others that took part.

Advertisement for The Chequers Inn. Includes text: 'A true locals pub where visitors are always made welcome', 'THE CHEQUERS INN', 'NITON ROAD · ROOKLEY · 840314'. Features images of the pub building, interior, and garden. Awards mentioned: 'VOTED BY 1999 UK FAMILY PUB OF THE YEAR', 'AS FEATURED IN THE 2009 GOOD BEER GUIDE', 'CAMRA AS FEATURED IN THE 2009 GOOD BEER GUIDE'. Text at bottom: 'Food served all day everyday • Large garden and car park • Extensive children's adventure playground www.chequersinn-iow.co.uk'

Quarr Abbey

There have been religious communities in an abbey at Quarr for nearly a thousand years and the ruins of the early buildings can be seen clearly today. At the time of the dissolution of the monasteries the abbey was sold and dismantled but the ruins were seen as suitable defence buildings and over the centuries they were reinforced and altered.



The site became of interest to a community of Benedictine monks who had sought refuge from persecution in France. They were living at the time at Appuldurcombe House but in 1907 they bought the Quarr site and moved onto it, living for a while in an existing Manor House.



Before long they had designed the new abbey and with local labour proceeded to construct the impressive buildings we can see today. A change took place in 1922 when about half of the monks decided to return to France. The rest carried on and gradually more and more Englishmen joined the community. In 1967 the first English Abbott of Quarr was elected.

Only a few monks now live at Quarr but to keep the site as an active and important area a sizeable grant was obtained to reinvigorate the area for visitors. It is now an attractive venue for travellers with a farm, a shop and tea rooms. In parallel with this the Isle of Wight Beekeepers were invited to help with the abbey apiary and there is now a thriving teaching apiary on the site.

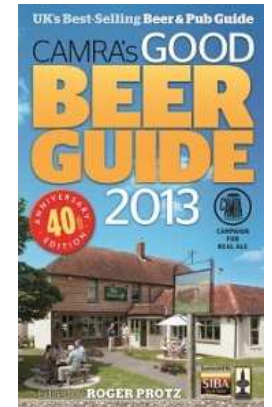
Rob Marshall

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OK, you enjoy good beer and the pubs you drink it in, so the chances are that, sooner or later, you'll buy your first copy of that mighty beer-lover's bible, the **Good Beer Guide**, published each year by the **Campaign for Real Ale – CAMRA** for short. In it you find not only the latest on the brewing scene and a lot of other background info, but the cream of UK pubs, and you wonder where on earth they get all the information from for so many of them up and down the country, but wouldn't it be a great job getting it!

Well the answer is that every pub in the GBG has been individually surveyed by a dedicated team of hard working volunteers who turn out, often on cold, wet, winter evenings, to survey pubs, unpaid and unthanked. And don't forget that for every pub in the GBG, there are another two, which didn't make it into print, but still had to be surveyed, because every CAMRA branch has a limit on the number of entries for their area – the Isle of Wight, for example, can only nominate 22 pubs out of the 170 or so in the area. And because there are so many good pubs around, it can be a very hard task to decide which ones go into the Guide and which ones don't; often, the winners are only a hair's breadth ahead of the losers. It can be very uncomfortable to explain to a disappointed tenant or manager just why their pub didn't make the GBG, because a Guide entry is a coveted accolade - it isn't just a pat on the back, it translates into hard cash coming over the bar.

So, when next you leaf through the pages of the Good Beer Guide, remember the hard work which went into it, not just by CAMRA members, but by the many pubs which compete fiercely for a place in the Guide. And spare a thought for the many deserving hostelrys which didn't make it.



The CAMRA Good Beer Guide can be bought from all good book shops and on-line from CAMRA Books.
www.camra.org.uk
 £12.99 + £2 shipping (members £10)

Hook Norton Ales now available on the Isle of Wight



from Island Ales - Tel: (01983) 821731

Thank you and well done to all that signed the Downing Street petition. We reached the 100,000 votes required and forced a Parliamentary Debate on a review of the Beer Duty Escalator. The Beer Duty Escalator was put in place by Alistair Darling in 2008 and automatically increases the tax on beer by an extra 2% over inflation and is due to run until 2014. Since its implementation the duty on beer has increased by 42% and over 5,000 pubs have closed.

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The Debate

The motion was debated on 1st November and was unanimously passed. For those of you who missed it here's a quick synopsis...

Synopsis

For three hours members of parliament from all the major parties stood up and said that the Beer Duty Escalator was a jolly bad thing. The only variation was one or two of the labour members said that whilst it may have been a good thing when they first thought of it, now that they were in opposition, times have changed and now it was a jolly bad thing.

Most of the members mentioned the jolly good pubs and breweries that they have in their constituencies. One man from Scotland got up and said the tax on whisky was a bad thing too, but he was put in his place by a nice looking lady in a big chair who said "Order, order. This debate is about beer, not whisky". There was even a joke. An M.P. said that the minister (the Treasury Minister for Finance, Sajid Javid) would have noticed the bad effect the tax was having with pub closures etc. unless "He is like the Olympic flame and never goes out" (geddit?).

continued →

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A couple of days later we walked around the city walls which are almost complete and along the canal towpath and came to The Old Harkers Arms, a Brunning and Price pub. No children, no music, no t.v., just ten real ales, excellent food, whiskys galore and a comprehensive wine list. This pub is definitely one to visit. The weather was good so we sat outside and watched the world go by on the towpath and the canal boats.



www.brunningandprice.co.uk/harkers

On into Welsh Wales and we stayed at Aberdaron and had a trip to Aber-soch. To escape from shopping I went into St. Tudwals Inn, a Robin-son's house. Unicorn and Dizzy Blonde beer but I had two bottles of Old Tom and at 8.5% it needs to be treated with respect.



Moved to Beddgekert, or as a local landlord called it Dead Dog city!

Camped in the forest. It was gloomy and wet most of the time but the Caernarvon to Porthmadog steam railway ran through the site and had its own station. Expensive ride but an enjoyable experience with the buffet trolley selling bacon butties and three real bottled beers. We went for a walk into the forest and walked to Rhyd Ddu at the foot of Snowdon. A very nice pub, the Cwellyn Arms - their proud boast is "open all day, every day, 9 days a week most of the time but not all of the time". Nine real ales, log fire and good food with a campsite nearby. www.cwellynarms.co.uk and on the way back we got a bit lost in the forest perhaps the beer had something to do with it but hey ho! we made it back.

On the way home we camped in the Forest of Dean and met nine of my cousins in The Dog and Muffler, near Coleford, for a hooley. It had three real ales - Butty Bach, a Wye Valley brew really hit the spot and a good time was had by all.



Good things have to come to end so here we are home again.

Pete Cobb

Pete and Heather's Autumn Trip up North and West

First stop Yorkshire for a family christening followed by a party at Horsforth golf club, Leeds. Excellent food and two real ales; Tetley bitter and Copper Dragon and a very enjoyable afternoon. Having recovered we walked around the moors near Osmotherley. After a fair distance we went back to Osmotherley and the Queen Catherine Hotel, a nice hotel set in a very picturesque village with four real ales; Wadsworth Horizon, Thwaites Lancaster Bomber and Wainwright and Black Sheep.



Like a fool, I agreed to go with my niece who regularly volunteers to help projects in The North Yorkshire National Park. The day's task was to help tidy a churchyard at Rosedale, a lovely village in the dales. We spent all day clearing 3 - 4ft high grass, carting it away and sowing wild flower seeds. When finished, around 4pm, we found The White House Farm Inn (winners of Yorkshire's Favourite Pub 2012) for a much needed drink; three real ales - Black Sheep, Theakston's Bitter and Timothy Taylors Landlord which was in cracking condition. The views from the terrace were superb and the Inn was very comfortable with very clean toilets - a good place for a break. All in all a very enjoyable day, although a few aches next morning.

The last pub we visited in Yorkshire was The Hole in The Wall in York which is a couple of minutes walk from York Minster - a friendly pub with good food and five real ales. It is a Marstons house but had guest beers as well.

On to Cheshire and Chester the County city which is a great place to visit with plenty of history and places of architectural heritage not to mention some wonderful watering holes. We visited a few places of interest and had a long walk down the river bank. On getting back to Chester and having a raging thirst went into The Brewery Tap which is owned by the Spitting Feathers Brewery. A very apt



name, as spitting feathers means "very thirsty". What a delight - a 15th century merchant's house with high walls, decorated with medieval wall hangings and behind the bar a very impressive fireplace. The staff were very friendly and knowledgeable about their products - seven real ales and a real cider. We drank the Brimstage Rhode Island Red and it was very good. It is Camra's joint pub of the year and the brewery's motto is "Life is too short for crap beer". Hear, hear!! www.spittingfeathers.org

At the end of the three hours, Mr. Javid thanked everyone for a jolly good debate and said he'd look into it.

It is worth noting here that several members wrote to their MPs including:- Richard Downing and Richard Harvey (MD Goddards Brewery) who pointed out that...

"Pub beer sales dropped 4.8% in the third quarter of this year, compared to the same period in 2011, with 51m fewer pints being sold – that's according to the British Beer and Pub Association's (BBPA) Beer Barometer; this on top of a decline in the second quarter.

I strongly believe that we are experiencing the application of the "law of diminishing returns" with respect to taxation on beer"..The labour governments "duty escalator" is another nail in the pub coffin.

I could quote all sorts of statistics, but fundamentally I am frightened that if beer prices in the pub continue to escalate we will lose a uniquely British institution, the pub. They will continue to close, or become restaurants. The village pub and community local will be gone forever. The customer to customer and customer to publican interaction will disappear.

I really despair of a future without a "friendly local".

After writing to Andrew Turner, the Island's MP, Isle of Wight CAMRA branch secretary Alex Lawson received a letter which is reproduced on the next page.

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Dear Mr Lawson

BEER DUTY ESCALATOR

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the beer duty escalator. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the debate as my other Parliamentary commitments meant that I had to be in Belfast.

I understand your concern about the effect the tax rise on beer may have on the pub industry.

The last thing I want to see on the Isle of Wight is pub landlords having to close their businesses. However, the revenue from beer duty makes an important contribution to public finances. This Government was able to reverse Labour's 10 per cent above inflation increase on cider tax when it came to power. However, the Government's strategy to deal with the deficit means that they wish for the time being to maintain the beer duty plan already set out by Labour.

If the planned escalator did not go ahead then the Treasury would have to find another £35million in taxes, or cut spending. The Treasury does however assure us that all duties and taxes are constantly under review.

I would appreciate your comments on what alternatives you would like to see the Government consider, and suggest how we can further help the pub industry.

In my view there needs to be some consideration of the distinction between those who drink in pubs and those who buy beer from supermarkets.

I hope this response is to your satisfaction. If you feel that I can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Turner
Member of Parliament for the Isle of Wight



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No Need to Fear The Levy - Yet!

I have been asked about the possible effect of the late night levy on the Island. Although the relevant legislation is in force, it is up to the local authority to decide whether to introduce it. If it comes in, the levy will apply to all Island public houses and clubs licensed to supply alcohol for consumption on the premises at or after midnight.

The law allows few exemptions from the levy, but bingo halls, theatres, cinemas, amateur sports clubs, community premises and some country village pubs may be excused from paying it.

The due amount, which is dependant on rateable value, will range between £299 and £4440 per annum, but a discount (up to 30%) may be available to any venue which is active in its local pubwatch scheme. Should the levy be introduced, all businesses will be given the chance to reduce their licensed hours free of charge, so as to avoid any liability to pay it.

Licenseses will be relieved to hear that the Late Night Levy will not apply on New Year's Eve.

We are not currently aware of any moves to bring in the late night levy on the Island. Hampshire Constabulary, which would stand to derive revenue from the scheme, is not actively pressing for its introduction at this time. Should the levy be contemplated here, the public, and all affected businesses, will be kept informed.

Finally

The police licensing team wish all Island licenseses and staff, and all responsible drinkers of good ale, a safe, happy Christmas and New Year.

Mark Voller
Licensing Sergeant



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Don't Get Smashed This Christmas

Police are determined to reduce the number of casualties on Island roads. Most so-called 'accidents' are entirely avoidable, with many being due to speeding or driver inattention. Drink/driving accounts for about one fifth of road deaths, so it is important we highlight this issue at Christmas, when the temptation for some drivers to take the risk is greater.

A recent police seminar held at the Sands Hotel, Sandown, focussed on the steps licensees can take to reduce the incidence of drink-driving. At the seminar, licence holders of local shops and pubs heard a hard-hitting message from PS Dave Sanderson and PC Martin Norman of the Island's Roads Policing Team. Their presentation included graphic images of the real-life misery caused by drink-driving.

The officers' key message is that licensees can prevent instances of drink-driving by informing customers, providing soft drinks to designated drivers, or offering alternative means of transport home. Where a customer is intent on driving home while over the limit, staff should consider politely challenging him and refusing to sell further alcohol. In some cases a driver may be persuaded to surrender the car keys.

Where a drunken customer simply won't listen, and is about to drive, it is time to call the police, as intervening to stop a drink/drive offence may save lives.

Police welcome a call via 101 (or 999 if urgent) from anyone concerned about a drink-driver. We especially need to know about the habits of the minority who persistently break the law. It helps us to know their vehicle details and their likely time, route and destination of travel. Wherever possible, officers will act on information from the public to stop the offender.

It doesn't stop there. Apart from any action the courts may take, licensees also have the option of imposing a pubwatch or shopwatch ban on drink-drivers.

Many licensees already work with us to prevent and detect drink-driving offences. Once again at Christmas we remind pub customers that driving home while over the limit won't be tolerated. We also want to share the message that licensees are on our side.

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Goddards Brewery

The **Fuggle-Dee-Dum** is being rolled out via Enterprise, their delivery contractors, and they have pubs buying from South Wales across to Kent. Goddards will be looking to further increase business with Enterprise in the New Year after the Christmas "distraction".

Richard Harvey, head brewer of Goddards has written to his local M.P as he feels so strongly about the duty escalator and the damage that is being done to the pub trade that he sent the e-mail off before the prompts and standard formatted mails from SIBA and CAMRA. He had a good reply from his MP in Salisbury, John Glenn.

Malt supplies should be o.k. for quality, although prices will probably increase due to "global markets". Hops: still awaiting a comprehensive assessment but not expecting good news.

They have completed and stillaged a brew of **Pie Eyed** and **Winter Warmer** is already up.

Brian Jacobs - Goddards BLO

Island Brewery

In November another new beer, **Wight Christmas**, a Bavarian cousin to the acclaimed **Jubilee** celebration ale was

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introduced. **Wight Diamond**, again using Munich malt and with the addition of chocolate malt to give it a seasonal dark character, is eagerly looked forward to. Business has been steady and expanding throughout the year, with some exciting and prestigious deals with the likes of Wells & Young, Fullers and Wadsworth, featuring in the Olympics and an expansion of the brewery, as previously reported. The arrangement with Wadsworth continues, with Island Brewery beers being distributed by Wadsworth and Wadsworth beers being brought to the Island through Island Ales, which is nice for anyone who enjoys the characteristic wet yeast flavour of Wadsworth's spectacular range. Apart from the spares to the brewing plant finally arriving after a two year wait, and the newly purchased rechargeable battery

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torch really coming into its own in these dark evenings and late mornings, there has been a new professional friendship struck up between Island Brewery and Dancing Man Brewery, based at the Platform Tavern, Southampton, who are brewers of a strikingly fantastic range of beers, mainly for their own bar. IW CAMRA have offered a BLO for the brewery, based on the premise that the establishment is only just on dry land and is actually on the IW side of Southampton walls. Approval has yet to be granted.

With such a successful entry into the Island market, we wait with anticipation to see where the continued growth and development of Island Brewery will take us next year, and wish Island Brewery every success and seasonal good will – merry Christmas and a happy New Year!
John Nicholson, BLO Island Brewer

Yates Brewery

Yates have come to the end of their contract with Punch Taverns but have been asked to tender for their winter beers.

David Snr. tells me that this is his favourite time of the year with the winter ales being brewed. The fantastic **Yule be Sorry** I.W. beer of the last four years is very well established as is

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Wight Winter. A new bottled beer - **Dark side of Wight** 5% ABV will be available shortly. There has been a massive increase in demand for **Garlic Beer** which was being bottled when I visited (great in casseroles and stews) now that the Garlic Farm is licensed to sell it at Christmas

The Crab and Lobster Tap

Grove Road, Ventnor 01983 852311
A friendly welcome, excellent real ales, delicious food and a fine selection of wines await you at the pub with charm, character and the oldest license on the island.

Victoria and Simon look forward to seeing you soon!

www.crabandlobstertap.org.uk



The Castle Inn
12 - 14 FITZROY STREET
SANDOWN
01983 403169
A FINE SELECTION OF REAL ALES
AND BEER AND CIDER FESTIVALS
A Happy Xmas to All!

Since Ken and Keith took over the Castle in May it has become more and more busy. There is a comprehensive menu featuring local produce including meat from local butchers Hamiltons. And how about this for a treat - House Speciality - Grilled calves liver & bacon with bubble and squeak!

There are four real ales - Timothy Taylor's Landlord and London Pride as regulars and two guest ales; at the time of writing, Island Brewery Wight Christmas and Ringwood 49er. Friday and Saturday nights are particularly busy with live music frequently featuring music from the Hollis brothers. It's the "Hottest Venue in Town" says Ken.

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Keith Cram and Ken Hollis

A Letter to the Editor

Following the interesting correspondence about dog-friendly and dog-free pubs, can I request a list of pubs that do not have piped music or loW Radio playing in every room?

I like some peace and quiet when I'm drinking beer so I can't stand the music. I suspect it is often played for the benefit of the bar staff.

If there is to be a new edition of the Island pub guide, can I please request that pubs which do not play piped-music are identified?

Many thanks.

Richard Dowling

Watch out for a symbol which will identify "at least one room free from piped music, TV, jukeboxes and electronic games". It will look like this



Q

The Castle Inn, Newport

Round about Christmas Day 2011 Keith Cram phone his friend Ken Hollis and told him the Castle Inn was up for sale. "Buy it" said Ken. And he did.

Keith and Ken spent their teenage years together in Shorwell as the village's inaugural "mods" and have been friends ever since.

On leaving school Ken went to sea with Royal Mail Lines and spent three years travelling the world whilst

Keith stayed on the Island eventually working for BP Oils.

Having had enough of the sea (*I know the feeling. Ed*), Ken

moved to London, at first working in hotels and then on to running pubs. He took out his first

licence in 1976 for the **White Horse** in Hertfordshire. For his

last 15 years in London he was landlord of the **Leicester Arms**

in Piccadilly Circus, a large

West End pub with a thriving food trade.

Keith Cram and his wife Barbara frequently visited Ken, staying at the pub for a few days London break. A couple of years ago they began discussing buying a pub together. When the lease on the Castle became available, Ken felt it was time to "come back home to roost". The last night party at the Leicester Arms featured music from Island band *The Moonshiners* including two of Ken's brothers Tim and Dave Hollis.



The Leicester Arms, Piccadilly Circus



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markets both here on the Island as well as the mainland.

A follow on from the hop picking at the Botanic Gardens Ventnor...

A good number of very high quality hops were picked this year which means the **TropicAle** will be in top condition.

Everyone at Yates Brewery wishes all readers a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year as do I.
Lorraine Daish BLO Yates

Regional Meeting and Brewery Visit

19 members had lunch at the Anchor Inn in Cowes and had a couple of good beers. Incidentally, the Anchor, on production of a valid CAMRA card, give discount on a pint. The meeting finished at 2.10ish and then members visited other pubs in Cowes. At 3 p.m. a bus, of 1966 vintage, belonging to the Isle of Wight Bus Museum and dressed in the livery of the Enterprise Bus Company, (long since defunct), took us to the Island Brewery. We were welcomed by Chris Coleman, Head Brewer and his son Ashley, Assistant Brewer. Chris gave a very good short presentation on how they brew and the



ingredients they used and this was followed by a sampling session. **RDA** (Real Dark Ale) and **Nipper** both went down very well but **RDA** was favoured by most. They had provided snacks and nibbles too, so, a very big thank you to Island Brewery for an excellent visit. The bus took us back to Cowes at 6 p.m.

Pete Cobb

Branch Diary Dates

- Jan 25 (Friday) 8pm, AGM, Traveller's Joy, Northwood.
- Feb 20 8.30pm, Castle, Newport.
- Mar 20 8.30pm, Cowes walkabout: see website.
- Apr 17 8.30pm, Chine Inn, Shanklin & walkabout.



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The Community Right to Buy

Think about it. You go down to your local, and instead of a warm, welcoming, worn about the edges bar offering a fine pint and good company, you find the impersonal aisles and shelves of a Tesco Express, where the nearest you'll get to that pint is a can of John Smiths Extra Smooth. What a nightmare!

Sadly, it's one which the regulars of over 200 British pubs have had to endure since 2010. Outrageous as it may seem, planning authorities have no powers to stop pubs being converted into convenience stores by arrogant supermarket chains who have no regard for pubs or the communities they serve.

CAMRA is currently campaigning to change the Use Classes Order to prevent this flagrant abuse of community treasures. Of course, viable pubs close for other reasons as well, and this is where help is at hand in the form of the 2011 Localism Act, which, *inter alia*, has introduced new rights for local communities to take over the running of community assets like pubs. Scotland, always, it seems, the precursor in legal reforms, has had this facility since 2004, but now it's been adopted for the rest of Britain.

Community groups now have the right to nominate an asset, public or private, like a community pub, to be included on their local authority's list of assets of community value and, if that authority agrees, it remains on the list for five years. It doesn't commit the group to bid for it should it come up for sale, but if they do, they have a full window of opportunity to put together a bid for it, and the owner can't sell the pub until that period has expired. Thus, at best it could see the pub remaining open for as far as can be foreseen, at worst, it delays its closure. So it might just be a Good Thing.

Of course, it's still a pretty daunting challenge for any group to do this, as the recent TV series 'The People's Pub' has shown. Raising the local support and funds to buy a pub, organising its set-up by people who probably have little experience in the licencing trade, and, above all, ensuring its sustainability, are all formidable challenges. However, as the People's Pub has shown, it can be, and has been, done.

So, the new legislation will depend for its impact on the commitment, enthusiasm and expertise of volunteers. However, at least it demonstrates that our esteemed elected representatives are partly removing their heads from the clouds and waking up to the fact that our treasured community pubs are under threat, and Something Must Be Done. It might be too little, it might be too late, but at least it's better than tears at a funeral.

Brian Jacobs



*The regulars at the **Raven Inn** at Llanarmon-yn-Ial in Wales, who now run the pub*

The Griffin

Many of you will have noticed that this Godshill pub has recently changed hands. It is now part of the group of pubs owned by Martin & Lisa Bullock and Mark McDonald. The group is split into two:-
Inns of Distinction

The Boathouse, Puckpool; **The New Inn**, Shalfleet; **The Fishbourne Inn** and

Family Pubs Isle of Wight Ltd

The Horse and Groom, Ningwood and now **The Griffin**, Godshill.



The Griffin reopened in October with a **Cider and Sausage Festival** which proved to be so popular it will almost certainly become an annual event. Prior to that it had been

closed for several weeks for a complete redecoration and a change of layout.

The most obvious change has been the entrance to the pub. The new, altered layout leads you straight into a comfortable lounge area with a fire. It has also created a snug area away from the diners with sofas, bar stools and a fire; ideal for a quiet drink.

Manager, Phil Banks returns to the pub with some new and some familiar faces. Martin, Lisa and Mark



are very keen on staff training and all front-of-house staff are encouraged to take NVQ's. The menu follows the same theme as the **Horse and Groom** with a changing daily specials board. All produce is locally sourced as much as possible.

Currently there are two regular ales, the popular **Doom Bar** and local **Scrumdiggity**. The guest ale at the time of writing was **Ringwood Best**. Plans for the future include a new layout for the kitchen and 4 en-suite guest rooms.

Wightwash would like to wish all at the Griffin well in their aim to re-establish **The Griffin** as a premier family dining venue and a popular village pub.

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